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Thomas Smith

Bramham Park

1906

With the author's compliments
to Mr Thackeray.
May 15. 1838

NIMROD'S

NORTHERN TOUR,

DESCRIPTIVE OF THE PRINCIPAL HUNTS

IN

SCOTLAND AND THE NORTH OF ENGLAND;

WITH THE

TABLE-TALK OF DISTINGUISHED SPORTING CHARACTERS,

AND

ANECDOTES OF MASTERS OF HOUNDS, CRACK RIDERS,

AND CELEBRATED AMATEUR DRAGSMEN.

LONDON:

WALTER SPIERS,

NEW SPORTING MAGAZINE OFFICE,

399, OXFORD STREET.

1838.

PREFACE.

CIRCUMSTANCES, over which the Proprietors had no controul, delayed the appearance of the following Tour in the "NEW SPORTING MAGAZINE," for some time after it was promised; and several interruptions occurred during the progress of it, which destroyed its continuity, and extended the publication over a longer space of time than it ought to have occupied.

Anticipating such an occurrence, the Proprietors took off a limited impression, as the work passed through the pages of the Magazine, in order that gentlemen might have "Nimrod's Northern Tour," in a connected form, without searching through the various volumes in which it lies scattered. With the exception of a few omissions of matter of mere momentary interest, the "Tour" retains its original language and form.

NEW SPORTING MAGAZINE OFFICE,
399. OXFORD STREET, LONDON.

NIMROD'S

NORTHERN TOUR.

———"Hæc olim meminisse juvabit."—Virgil.

"When time, who steals our hours away,
Shall steal our pleasures too,
The memory of the past will stay,
And half our joys renew."—Moore.

The promises of authors, like lovers' vows, are not always to be depended upon; but I feel confident that the cause of my not having fulfilled mine by the earlier appearance of a recapitulation of what I saw on my Northern Tour, will be duly appreciated by your readers, to whom it has already been made known. Some persons, however, have asked me, why I did not commence it whilst in Scotland? to whom I had an answer at hand. In the first place, I might as well think of sleeping in a whirlwind as to write any thing to please myself unless in retirement and privacy; and consequently, as unless I please myself, I should despair of pleasing others, I did not attempt to do so. I am not one of those who imagine that precipitancy in publishing is any indication of genius. I should rather say of ignorance, and I would sooner own that I had to combat with a mind tardy in producing its stores, than offer them to the world in a rude unfinished state. In the present instance,

indeed, it would be an act of black ingratitude were I not to endeavour to make the only return I can make for the reception I met with in Scotland, as acceptable as my ability will allow me. Neither do I stop here. Simply to be remembered is no satisfaction; it is a privilege which vice as well as virtue can confer; but the pleasing reflection which I should draw, were I to indulge in the hope that the name of Nimrod may be remembered in Scotland when he who assumes it shall be no more, would arise from the wish that, with that name, *one* virtue should be associated—a proper sense of feeling for the kindness and hospitality he received in it.

The circumstances that led to my "NORTHERN TOUR" are as follows. All the sporting world know the Earl of Kintore, his social and good-humoured character, his warmth of friendship which knows no bounds, and his enthusiastic love of fox-hunting which I should imagine cannot well be exceeded. I became acquainted with his lordship some ten or twelve years back at Melton, and have since enjoyed his friendship, and partaken of his benevolence. Now sympathy has been called the mother of friendship—and justly so called, for the weight of sorrow is broken by being divided, and no doubt my noble friend sympathized with me in my present situation, deprived of the enjoyment of a sport he is aware I love nearly as much as he loves it himself. One evening in the month of September, 1834, then, I saw a tripple letter lying on my table with the seal uppermost, the impression on which was a fox's head, with the words "Floreat scientia" on the wreath that encircled it. "*A sportsman;*" said I to myself, and, turning the other side uppermost espied "Kintore" in the corner. The purport of the letter was, to convey to me the good wishes of his lordship for my future prospects in life, and to tell me that he thought it might "put a spoke in my wheel" if I

were to pass a winter in Scotland, where he could ensure me a welcome reception.

The pleasure this invitation afforded me, or the feelings it gave birth to, I need not take the trouble to describe. My readers will appreciate them; neither would it have been necessary to observe, considering the auspices under which I was about to appear among them, that I was likely to be most kindly received by my brother sportsmen in the North. A second letter from my noble friend was conclusive of every thing. In it he gave me to understand that he should order two horses to be hired for my use, from a "would-be Tilbury" in Edinburgh, and that they should await my arrival at Dunse, Lord Elcho's head quarters, by the first week in November; and from Dunse my future route was marked out by him. But before I quit the notice of these letters, I must be allowed to mention a fact strongly indicative of the habits and character of the writer of them, and affording, in my opinion, an almost unprecedented instance of punctuality in the movements of a person not tied to time, nor in any wise controlled by circumstances. His lordship informed me that he was about to set out for the South on a certain day;—that he should visit the kennels of certain masters of fox-hounds in various parts of England, naming them all, as also the exact time of doing so;—that he should be for two days in London, and at home again on the sixteenth day, *which he was, after keeping every one of his appointments!* But punctuality and fox-hunting go hand-in-hand; and it might perhaps create the surprise of the trader were he to know with what scrupulous exactness the management of a kennel of fox-hounds is conducted. On his lordship's arrival at home his head whipper-in also went upon furlough, to visit his friends in the New Forest, fourteen days being allotted to him

for his trip; and, of course, after the example of his noble master and his huntsman, he was punctual to his time to return.

But it is now time that I should think of moving, and I must take a peep into my almanack to assist my memory on that point. But in the autumn of the year, no man can say exactly when he can quit Calais for England, as, barring the samiel of the desert, or the sirocco, we have every description of climate here, and often on the same day. A most desperate equinoctial gale, however, causing a great loss of life on this coast, prevented my embarking by a week so soon as I intended; and even the stupendous power of steam could scarcely face it when I did. Nevertheless, after a touch-and-go on the bar, which produced something like a view-holloa from the ladies, and the very disagreeable view of a steamer in great danger, on the shore, I arrived at Dover on the 30th of October, somewhat afflicted with the *maladie de mer*, a further description of which may very readily be dispensed with.

A good fire and some comfortable refreshment at the London Hotel soon made "all right," as we say on the road, and as the guests in the coffee-room consisted of only two Irish gentlemen and myself, we very soon, after the fashion of the continent, "joined cry," as we say in the field. One of them it appeared resided in the same county (Lowth) in which the late Sir Harry Goodricke's property was situated, and he mentioned several interesting circumstances relating to that very celebrated English sportsman, some of which set forth, in a strong light, not only the loss that county sustained by his death, in the cessation of the improvements he was making on his estate, but also the *causa causæ* of half the misery of Ireland in the absence of their nobility and gentry. One anecdote of

my deceased friend is characteristic of the man, although not of the country which gave birth to it, at the same time that, when associated with the native humour of its people, it cannot but create a smile. A sporting yeoman in his neighbourhood, and an esteemed judge in horse-flesh, had eloquence sufficient to induce Sir Harry to leave three hundred pounds in his hands with which he was to purchase for him "a pair of hunters" that were to beat every horse in Leicestershire. Whether such non-pareils were not to be found, is not for me to say; but one thing is certain—no horses, either good or bad, were sent to Leicestershire. Then, what said the Baronet when he arrived in Lowth the next summer? Why, *nothing;* but going over to the sporting yeoman's house, he took his two best hunters out of the meadow in which they were regaling themselves, and had them led to his own stables.

There must be something forcibly striking to any person on his first landing in England, after a long sojourn in France, and perhaps nothing more so—at least such is my own case—than the absence of that violent gesticulation which accompanies speech on this side the water; and which, on very interesting topics, is carried to such a pitch as to justify the extravagant encomium of a Latin writer on some eminent professors of the pantomimic art—namely, that "in each of their eloquent hands, there was a tongue."

The following morning I took my place on the box of the Eagle coach, which leaves Dover at eight o'clock, A.M.; and here I must draw one more comparison between the country I was now in, and that which I had just left. When comparing the literature of the two nations, a French writer of acknowledged abilities candidly says, that he had been at a loss to determine in what department of it his countrymen excelled

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the English, or in what the English excelled them. But between the systems of travelling in France and in England, there cannot be admitted any parallel; nor indeed for the former, any apology; and when I am seated on the box of an English stage coach, and contrast the neatness of its build with the clumsiness of a French Diligence; the brightness—I was nearly saying elegance—of its harness, with the poverty-struck tackle of the other, which an English farmer in some counties would be ashamed of; the personal cleanliness, and almost genteel, although appropriate, character of the coachman, with the dirty, smoke-dried, smock-frocked, non-descript appearance of the diligence driver; and though last, not least, the rapid and soul-stirring pace of its horses, with the funereal slowness of the others, I cannot help feeling a conscious pride in the superiority of my own country, as regards the actual operations of common life. But here the energy of the British mind comes into play. A saving of time is every thing to an Englishman; whereas—as far as my experience has gone—a Frenchman thinks little of it. Discussing this point with one of them on our journey from hence to Dunkirk—only twenty-five miles, which occupied rather better than five hours, by the Lisle diligence,—he acknowledged the tardiness of French travelling, but added emphatically, that *it was much cheaper than in England.* This I denied; and told him that if I had not been called upon to mount the diligence by two hours so soon as I was called upon, I could have earned three times the amount of my fare to Dunkirk in those two hours.

But to return to the Eagle coach. My chief object in selecting it out of the many that leave Dover for the Metropolis, was to see the performance of a coachman called Bill Watson, whose father and *four* brothers are all on the bench on the same road—a circumstance unparalleled, I

believe, in the annals of English coaching. We were strangers to each other, which suited my book the better, as I was then sure of seeing him in his every-day costume; that is to say, in his real character as the driver of a very well-appointed and sufficiently fast coach, on perhaps the most difficult road that is now to be found within the same distance from London. Nor could I have selected a better day for my observance of him; for having to take up some passengers in two or three very narrow streets, and those full of interruptions from building materials, I had a good opportunity of judging of his powers of coachmanship, and he certainly afforded me a treat. I found he not only was gifted with that delicacy of finger which is indispensable to perfection in the art, with strength equal to any thing that may be required of him for his box, but that he had all the quickness of the new school with the formerly-indispensable qualification of the old one—I mean, the proper and ready use of his whip; and which, on such ground as his is, is more essential to safety than the generality of persons are aware of.

In short, from the scientific way in which he caught his thong upon his crop, it was always ready for either wheelers or leaders, and the rapidity with which he applied it to his leaders when wanting—the near-side ones in particular—I have never seen equalled. But it was on the summit of the first hill we had to descend that the performance of this artist most gratified me, for he showed me that he was one of the few of his fraternity that are sufficiently aware of the attraction of gravitation,—or, in other words, that the weight of his coach would multiply by its velocity—by pulling up his horses nearly to their walk, before he began to descend it. He then handed his coach down it in a masterly manner, without the assistance of the drag, and consequently

availed himself of the momentum of increased speed, when it arrived on level ground.

Although my ride by the side of Watson was a short one, as I was going no further than Rochester, we discussed many subjects in succession by the way. At last the New Sporting Magazine turned up. "I wonder," said he, "who wrote that *punishing* account of us Dover coachmen, though to be sure the description he gave of the changing at Gravesend was not much amiss. I dare say it was Nimrod. But I won't *have** that £20 a year for the washerwoman's bill; no—no—*that won't do*;—what's to become of the baker's bill at that rate? But the best of the joke was," continued he, "I was spending an evening at the house of a friend of mine, in London, about the time that number of the Magazine came out, when it was read aloud to the party, and no one but my friend knew I was a coachman, and *a Dover coachman too!* 'Twas a hardish hit, but I stood it like brick and mortar, tailor's bill and all†." But really looking at Watson on his box this day—his clean shirt, his well starched neckcloth, and every thing else clean about him—not omitting the good bit of broad-cloth and well brushed beaver, nor, above all things the neat balconyed house, on the terrace, a mile out of Dover, where he pulled up to drop a word to Mrs. Watson,—looking at all this, I say, who can but rejoice that the liberality of the British public enables a man of this grade in life to do credit to his calling—one of no small importance to such a gad-about people as the English—and to induce him to persevere in that line of conduct which will ensure him a lengthened continuance of it.

* A flash word for "believe" or "acknowledge."

† Stated at £100 per annum.—vide, vol. 7, p. 316.

I have not yet done with Watson and his coach. Observing Mrs. Watson, as she stood at the window, to cast an anxious look at her husband as he was in the act of mounting his box, I was cogitating within myself whether there might not be something in it that was ominous, and looked for "the raven on the chimney's top," when Watson himself thus dispelled the illusion. "My Missis," said he, "will be anxious to see how I stand it this journey, for this is the first day I have been at work for these last ten weeks. I have been laid up with a bad leg from a scrape of the roller-bolt, and thought at one time I was book'd by the down mail—at all events, that nothing but the knife could have saved me." The mention of this circumstance, however, might have been omitted by me here, had it not been associated with a curious fatality that has attended some of our very best road coachmen on their descending from a coach-box to a gig. During his sojourn in London for the benefit of superior surgical assistance, Watson twice took an airing in a gig, and was twice ran away with, and nearly killed. I have, somewhere, but cannot now put my hand upon it, a list of coachmen who have been killed out of gigs, the celebrated Dick Vaughan, of the Cambridge Telegraph, at the head of them.

At Rochester I took my leave of Watson, very much pleased with all I saw of his performance on the bench, as well as with his general demeanour; and we parted as we met, both strangers to each other. The object of my leaving his coach here was, to pay a visit to a favourite sister whose husband is in command at Chatham, as well as one of the Aid de Camps to the King; and it happened that I arrived on a day on which he had a very large party to dinner, of which there appeared to be about an equal number of coats, red, black, and blue, dispersed amongst the ladies, but all of them strangers to me. To dwell long on this dinner

party would be indicative of bad taste on my part, and I should imagine by no means to be wished for by my readers; but one circumstance occurred which I cannot persuade myself to pass over.

The officer of the watch came to report a fire in the neighbourhood, which was at first imagined to be on the property of a gentleman who was one of the guests of the evening, but so far the alarm proved false. It was an incendiary fire, as the term is, on an, unfortunately, uninsured farmer and hay jobber, consuming, as we ascertained next morning, nine large ricks of hay and two of corn, and, it was asserted, causing irredeemable ruin to the owner! Well might the poet sing—the thought, I believe, is Seneca's—

> "Of Heaven's protection who can be
> So confident, to utter this?
> *To-morrow I shall spend in bliss.*"

But what protection can human power afford against the cowardly act of the midnight incendiary? The crime was unknown in my young days, and I believe it is not of English growth; but I have always considered it the worst sign of the times, and one that calls for the severest punishment our laws can inflict*. The victim here was an overseer of the poor.

On the third morning after my arrival at Chatham, I took my departure from it for London, and was told by my brother-in-law that I should find "a character" in the driver of the coach that he had ordered to call at his door for me, to take me to the "little city." "His name?" in-

* By the law of the Twelve Tables, the incendiary was first whipped, and then delivered to the flames. Gibbon says "in this example alone our reason is tempted to approve the justice of retaliation."

quired I. "*Mr.* Chomley," answered the colonel, "for I assure you he does not think small beer of himself; but you will find him a most civil and entertaining fellow-traveller, and, for all I know to the contrary, a good whip." Of the last-mentioned qualification I soon had an opportunity of judging, for he had a young horse at wheel which was never in a coach before, and he handed him down the hill into Rochester—very pushing ground by the bye—in a masterly way; particularly so as his mouth was any thing but good. Of the first, his colloquial powers, we had a specimen as I was in the act of mounting the box. "Take *especial* care of this gentleman," said the colonel to him, "if you break his neck, you'll have the sporting world in mourning." "You may depend upon that, colonel, *and of myself too*," replied Mr. Chomley, as he let his thong fall gently on the young one, to keep him up to his collar, for he was getting somewhat impatient; and with the old-fashioned whistle through his teeth—for Mr. Chomley is of the old school—we were off.

I make it a rule never to say much to a coachman till he is clear of the town which he starts from, as all his attention is wanting in the arrangement of his passengers and their luggage, and many things besides. But I soon found that this was not likely to be one of Mr. Chomley's brightest days, from the answer he gave at our first stop in Rochester, to the usual question, among a certain class of people, of, "How be you, Mr. Chomley?" from a friend who stood in the street. "Why that is more than I can tell you," said Chomley; "but I've a d—d bad head-ache to *begin* with." The fact was, he had had a blow-out at his cottage the night before, with a few choice spirits like himself, which had been kept up till rather a late hour, and Richard was *not* himself again. I could, however, discern in the conversation I had with this person on our journey, as well as from the description he gave me of his cottage and its contents, that he

possessed what has been more profitable to him than a coach-load of wit—namely strong sterling sense, and a very civil tongue—although no doubt, with brothers in soul, a smart reply often produces an extra shilling.

But the cottage with its contents, what can I say of that? Why, nothing until I accept Mr. Chomley's pressing invitation to inspect it on my next visit to the colonel, when he assured me I should find in it "as good a bottle of port as any in Kent, and not a very bad collection of pictures!"

Being now on the road, will you allow me a short digression? It is really lamentable to contemplate the numerous accidents of late to first-rate coaches, and attended, in all cases, with loss of either life or limb, from the giving way of axle-trees; and to one, the Yarmouth Magnet, from the loss of a wheel, by which a young woman had both her thighs broken! It appears that all I have written on this subject has had no effect in preventing these dreadful occurrences, but it is high time they should be put an end to—at all events that such means as are most likely to prevent them, should be resorted to. With respect to the loss of wheels to which fast coaches, with the common linch-pin, are always liable—I can name one which lost six in nine years—there should be an act of Parliament to make it imperative that no stage-coach should travel the road without its wheels being secured by screws, which is the principal feature as regards safety in what are called patent boxes. As to the giving way of axle-trees,—a never-failing cause of injury to passengers from the rapid rate at which coaches now travel,—it is absurd to say, that occurrence cannot be prevented, even without having recourse to the idle wheel. How does the cable hold the ship but by multiplying its power according to the tonnage of the vessel? We are told, "the

master of mechanics laughs at strength,"—a boast, I am aware, that relates to the lever's power; nevertheless it would be absurd to say, after seeing how an iron cable will hold a large ship, that iron axle-trees cannot be made sufficiently strong to bear the weight of a loaded coach which never exceeds three tons *. Mail-coaches, we know, are often overturned from the necessity of keeping their time in all weather; but they cannot lose their wheels, and their axle-trees very rarely give way, because they are more than equal to the superincumbent weight, which, from the limited number of passengers, &c. is much less than that of the long stage-coaches, as they are called. Without doubt the axle-trees of the latter should be put to some test before they are used on the road, and proved equal to the weight they have to carry; and it should be seen that the iron is quite free from flaw. But I fear the cry-out of the persons who horse our coaches has something to do with broken axle-trees, by their insisting upon the weight of them being confined within certain bounds; and we all know the difficulty of combining strength with lightness. I have been chiefly led into this digression by the hope that these remarks may find their way into the newspapers, which it is probable they may do, as the gentlemen connected with them often, no doubt, trust their persons on coaches, and a clever editor, Whig or Tory, is a public loss. But life is like honour, which Virgil says is no where safe.

I have not much to say of my short visit to London, which appears to me to get bigger and bigger every time I see it. In fact we may almost say of it, what Aristotle said of Babylon, that it might rather be called

* The weight of twelve passengers and their luggage averages one ton. The modern coaches do not exceed (few amount to) a ton; I have, therefore allowed quite the maximum weight.

a country than a city. One circumstance, however, attended my entrance into it which I am quite certain never occurred before, and I may venture to predict will never occur again. It was the first of November—popularly considered the first day of winter—and the water-carts were at work, not only in the streets, but on the roads!

I had the choice of two coaches to take me to the north, but fixed on the Wellington, because I like the name; it is borne by a man who has not only done honour to his country in the field, but who is its best friend in the senate, as after-times will show. At half-past three o'clock then, I started on the box of this said Wellington coach, from the Bull and Mouth Hotel, when I found I was by the side of a coachman whom I knew very well by sight; but as I never travelled by his coach*, he had lost all recollection of me. This was "*Old* Penny," as he is called—not much of a misnomer, by the bye—one of the few to be seen on rather a swell drag out of London, of the low-crown'd, broad-brimm'd, shawl-neckerchief'd, large-pocketted, silver-button'd, box-coated, knee-capp'd, old fashioned coachmen, "with an hue as florid as vermilion'd Jove;" who can no more help thrusting both their hands into their coat-pockets at the change, and "just stepping into the house to say a word to Missis," than they could go two months without their dinners. But this just stepping in and stepping out every change between London and Huntingdon, where Penny stops, may be "Penny-wise," but the proprietors must find it "pound-foolish," for time must be lost by it, or else made up at the expense of the stock. Old habits, however, are difficult to break through, and my old acquaintance has always been accustomed to heavy work. He is, however, a good man with heavy horses,

* The Exeter Subscription Coach from the Bull and Mouth; and here let me remark that all the Bull and Mouth coaches have their wheels secured by screws.

shoving them along, when he is going, fast enough for any thing, and is, I believe, an old and favoured servant of the Bull and Mouth yard.

A pleasant companion is said to shorten the road, and as I was booked to Newcastle, nothing could have been more desirable on so long a journey. In fact, when I get upon a coach, I always endeavour to find the "comes jucundus," which the facetious Publius Syrus says, is as good as a coach itself*. On this occasion, however, he was not to be found, so Penny and myself had it all to ourselves. Of course we got upon the Basingstoke road, on which we had both been at work, and of course Jack Peer and the Nimrod coach were not omitted in our discourse. Here, however, Horace's excellent advice, not only of "Quid de quoque viro," but also of "*et cui dicas*," would have been useful to my brother whip, for nearly every word he uttered respecting Peer's reason for quitting the Southampton Telegraph—as likewise of the inducements held out to him to return to it, was false. But I do not blame Penny for all the lies he told me on this subject, for they were the lies of others, at second hand, he having swallowed all he had heard; and I think it is Doctor Watts, in his Logic, who makes the nice distinction between telling a man he is telling an untruth, and unceremoniously telling him he lies. The one only conveys to him the naked idea of his error, which the Doctor terms the "primary idea;" but the word *lie* carries a secondary idea; for it implies both the falsehood of the speech, and the reproach and censure of the speaker. However, I affected to believe all I heard, and though we parted without being further known to each other, I tipp'd Penny an extra shilling for old acquaintance sake.

* "Comes jucundus in via pro vehiculo est." A pleasant companion is as good as a coach.

But it is time for myself now to take the advice of Horace ; to have an eye to the "ne quid nimis ;" and not loose too much time on this ground. I cannot, however, help remarking, despite of the regard I have for the fraternity of the whip, that road coachmen, and old one's in particular, are a good deal given to cram their passengers when they find their swallow is good—although they sometimes bring it on themselves by asking absurd questions. And yet the art of cramming is not solely practised by coachmen, for men of all trades and grades now and then have recourse to it. No doubt many of your readers will remember my anecdote of Mr. Joliffe's huntsman, the facetious Roffey, cramming "the London gentleman," as he called him, with an account of a run over Surrey, making it appear about three times as good as it had been. On being remonstrated with on this breach of his veracity, he coolly exclaimed—"Why I thought I must give the gentleman *something* to take back with him to London." I have also met with first-rate crammers in the upper walks of life, who, as Shakspeare says, would "cram words into my ears against the stomach of my sense ;" but they are not so common as they were wont to be. I remember Mr. Warde used to finish the description of a country which he once hunted, with saying, it was a good one for hounds, and a well-mounted man might lie with *them*, but no man could lie with its *squires*.

I have read many high-flown descriptions of the "divine pleasures of the tea-table," on a winter's night,—the blazing fire, the warm hearth-rug, the flowing curtains and the hissing urn—not omitting the pretty tea-maker—whilst the wind and rain are raging audibly without, and, as the poet says,

"——— At the doors and windows seem to call,
As heav'n and earth they would together fall ;"

But none feel these blessings, in reality, like those who have been for many hours on a coach-box, in a cold, wet night; and they were very efficiently presented to us at ten o'clock this night at Huntingdon, the stop on our road. But the breakfast at Barnby-moor, the next morning at eight o'clock! that was a still greater treat; for at no nobleman's castle in the county could a better have been provided. When I was last there, the celebrated Mr. Clarke—celebrated for his breed of cattle and his horses, as well as for his larder and cellar, kept it, and I was glad to find the reputation of the house was not about to suffer by the change of landlord, which is saying a good deal in this case.

On mounting the box again, I could see the country we were passing through, which is hunted by Mr. Foljambe, and it appeared to me to be a good one to ride over; but it was nearly as hard at this time as it could have been at any period of the summer; we were now, however, I was told, nearly on the outside of it, and soon arrived in the far-famed town of Doncaster; and as every thing there savours of sporting, we picked up a sporting guard, who, as I learnt from the coachman, had dropped his blunt on the St. Leger of the last year. "What's his name?" said I, "Ben Reader," replied he; "and he's a droll chap, I assure you, sir." "Then," said I, "I'll crawl along the side of the coach and have some chat with him." Nimrod speaks:

"Well, Mr. Guard, you made a pretty business of your last Leger."

Guard. "*All over the left shoulder;*" they drawed me of forty pound, and be damned to them."

Nimrod. "What! you stood your blunt upon Plenipo.—did you?"

Guard. "To be sure I did; all Lunnun to a cheesecake, if the thieves had'nt poison'd him."

Nimrod. "*Who* poisoned him?"

Guard. ——— ——— ——— (He here mentioned the name of a person, who I am quite sure had no more to do with it than I myself had.)

Nimrod. "For shame! How can you speak so disrespectfully of a person of such respectability, and one of your own county too?"

Guard. "D—n 'em, there's nought they won't any on 'em do to get money; *he was the man,* as sure as you are on this coach!"

Here our conversation on this subject dropped, and it was time it should drop. But see the mischief these turf robberies have occasioned in lessening the respect of the lower for the higher orders of society! Neither does it stop here. It is true, the character of a *country* should not be implicated in isolated cases, originating in individual motives of recklessness or of avarice; but the character of England is at this time suffering in the eyes of the whole world from the almost every-day exposure of the villainy practised at our principal race-meetings, to which no final check appears to have been as yet given, or even attempted to be given from that quarter from which it would be most effectual. I have every reason to believe, that the noblemen and gentlemen who compose our long established, and, hitherto, highly regarded Jockey Club, have from time to time, adopted rules and regulations to restrain villainy and reward integrity, but still, year after year, these robberies occur. It can only be

inferred then, that they must act more vigorously than they have as yet done, if they wish the turf to regain its respectability, which is now so rapidly decreasing. In fact, if they refuse to do so, it will soon come to this, that whoever enters upon it largely, must adopt one of two alternatives—he must either rob or be robbed.

But to return for a moment to my conversation with the guard of the Wellington coach. Perhaps as strong a proof as need be produced, of the absolute necessity of a reform in the racing world, and that without such reform noblemen and gentlemen of character will become shy of supporting it, may be found in the remark made to me a few months back by a gentleman who was for many years a leading character on the English turf, but who has retired from it, as he entered upon it—with an unblemished reputation. "Upon my word," said he to me, in Calais, where I accidentally met him on his return to England; "if I had horses engaged in great stakes now, I should sometimes be almost as much afraid of winning as of losing them—so much suspicion being attached to racing in these days." I have often thought how many painful moments would have been spared to Mr. Batson, if he had taken the hint given in the article on the Turf in the Quarterly Review, of putting Plenipo. into his pocket, rather than sending him "to contend against twenty Yorkshire jockies." But perhaps he considered this "a fool's advice," for what can the Quarterly Review know of racing? But what says the *Fool* in the play of King Lear? Why that "he is mad who trusts in the tameness of a wolf, *a horse's health*, or a * * * * * *'s oath."

At rather an early dinner-hour, the Wellington pulled up at the door of the Black Swan Inn, in the ancient, but dreadfully dull town of York.

I must here also do justice to the accommodation afforded the passengers by this coach, at this inn, where as good a dinner was provided as hungry people need wish for; nor shall I soon forget the most excellent leg of the four year old black-faced sheep which formed part of it, bred, fed, and killed by the landlord. It was likewise amusing to contrast the speed with which we had travelled from the Metropolis to York, (two hundred miles in less than twenty-four hours!) with a framed and glazed* advertisement, which hung over the fire-place, informing the public, that "God willing," their persons would be conveyed from York to the Metropolis in somewhere about as many days. The date thereof I do not now recollect. I wish I could continue in the same strain of commendation to my journey's end, for I hate to have occasion to find fault. But picture to yourself a coach pulling up at the cheerless hour of midnight at the end of a journey of nearly three hundred miles, and the passengers shown into a room, in the month of November, without a hatful of fire in the grate, and full of foul air, strongly impregnated with gas! Such, however, was our reception at the hotel we drove to in Newcastle, and this too in the very heart of the coal district! I may, however, have been unfortunate in my day, for several gentlemen to whom I mentioned the circumstance, assured me that in a general way the house in question is a very excellent one, and the private department comfortable and well conducted. Coach Inns, as they are called, from the circumstance of an extravagant rent being given on condition of a certain number of coaches emptying their live lumber into them daily, are, however, generally sad uncomfortable places, and a hint to landlords to study a little more the comfort of travellers, like myself, may not be here out of place.

* For a copy of this see New Sporting Magazine, vol, i. p. 438.

The next morning the carriage of Mr. Surtees, of Hamsterley Hall, arrived in Newcastle, for the purpose of conveying me thither—distant about ten miles, but as Mr. Surtees, Junr. accompanied it, and the day was a very fine one, he proposed that we should ride to Hamsterley in preference to going in the carriage, which I readily agreed to, particularly as he gave me to understand that he should take me through a beautiful country, by a new road which was then making in the direction of his father's house. About three o'clock then we were under weigh — he on a hack which his servant had ridden after the carriage, and myself on a Newcastle hack, that was deserving of a better fate ; and after sauntering at our ease through one of the most picturesque, well-wooded, and well-watered valleys I ever beheld in my life, passing Axwell-park, the seat of Sir Thomas Clavering, Bart., and Gibside, one of the seats of Mr. Bowes, of sporting celebrity, and one of the representatives of the county of Durham, we arrived at Hamsterley just in the nick of time, that is to say, at the first clap of the dressing-bell.

Who and what Mr. Surtees of Hamsterley is, I shall have great pleasure in once more informing my numerous readers; and having had occular demonstration of his domicile, I shall avoid a mistake which I fell into in my Yorkshire Tour, of confounding it with that of his late accomplished relation, Mr. Surtees of Mainsforth-hall near Sedgefield, author of the "*History of Durham*," considered a standard work. Now the 'Squire of Hamsterley is not, to my knowledge, an author, but "every inch of him" a sportsman; yet who more proper than himself to write on the antiquities of any country?—he being a most religious observer of the remains of ancient times, in the unbounded hospitality of his house and table;—one who it might be imagined had

himself existed in those ancient times when men had high notions of the rights of hospitality, and not merely the rules of civility; when, as Homer says, strangers were received as guests from heaven; — one who thinks with me, that the over-refinements of polished life are but a mask for insincerity and heartlessness,—in short, a true sample of the old English 'Squire, and as good a judge of a horse, a hound, a bottle of port wine, and an oak-tree, as any man in England, or any where else. Such, reader, is the well-known Anthony Surtees of Hamsterley, who *commanded*—not invited me to his house, when on my Yorkshire Tour; who receives under the shadow of his roof, not only his friends themselves, but their servants, their horses, their *hounds*—in short any thing they may favour him with, that contributes to their amusement and comfort. He has, however, an excellent house to stow them in, and perhaps one of the best timbered estates in the county of Durham, in the management of which, as regards the growth and arrangement of the timber, he is said to have few equals, the result of attentive experience.

By the way, the allusion to this gentleman's timber reminds me of a fact respecting the larch tree, which it may not be amiss to repeat on such practical authority as his. It relates to the progress of its growth, which, he informed me, is as follows:—

In the first ten years—one part.
In the next five and a half, one part.
In the next six and a quarter, two parts.
In the next six and three-quarters, four parts.

I am also of my own knowledge able to state a rather singular proof

of the rapid growth of this tree, where it likes the soil. A brother-in-law to me built an entrance lodge to his domain in North Wales, in which no other wood was used but larch of only twelve years growth !

Previously to my setting out for the North, a report had reached me that Mr. Surtees was unwell, and I was prepared to find him not the same " Anthony Surtees" that I had seen him during the jovial fortnight I spent in his society at Sedgefield, when on my Yorkshire Tour ; but I am happy to say, that although he may feel something of the *non sum qualis eram* about himself, from the knocks and thumps to which we fox-hunters are subject—in addition to having seen nearly half a score of christmas days since then, I saw not the slightest alteration in either his appearance or his spirits. I can only say, that, following the example set me by mine host, and by the help of sundry other irresistible allurements, I drank more claret during the five or six days I spent at Hamsterley, than I had done in that space of time for many a long day before.

On Tuesday the fourth of November, Mr. Surtees, Jun. and myself went to meet Sir Matthew White Ridley's hounds at Oakwood-gate, about ten miles from Newcastle, on the Carlisle road, and about the same distance across country from Hamsterley. To reach it we had two rivers to cross, the Derwent and the Tyne, which latter being full we made the passage in a horse-boat of by no means the safest construction, at a place called Wylam.—Sir Matthew Ridley's hounds were the only pack in these parts that I did not hunt with in my former visit to the North, and of course I was very anxious to obtain a sight of them, though, from reasons unnecessary to mention here, it was deemed advisable to take a peep incognito. Indeed, as Mr. Surtees was

going to hunt during the beginning of the season in the South, and had remained beyond his time at his father's for the purpose of receiving me, he had no hunters at Hamsterley, so it was arranged that we should go out in mufti, as the soldiers call it, on our hacks, and see as much from such mounts as we could. We arrived at the place of meeting before the hounds, and as we sat upon the toll-bar watching the arrivals, my companion paid me the compliment of comparing my situation to that of the poet Moore's at Venice, when Lord Byron and he looking from their palace windows on some English passers by on the canal, the latter observed how they would stare if they knew "who was looking at them!" Presently the hounds and the red coats of the servants appeared in the long vista formed by the turn-pike road, and I felt my heart beat quicker at the inspiriting sight, after so long an estrangement!

Independently however of the charms that a hunting field always affords me, I had another reason for wishing for a day with Sir Matthew Ridley's hounds. He had lately changed his huntsman, and availed himself of the services of a gentleman whom I had before heard of, as one of some celebrity in the field; namely, Mr. Boag, who had at one time the management of, and hunted, the Doxford, now the Gale-wood, hounds, now kept by Major St. Paul, of which I shall hereafter have something to say.

The history I believe of Mr. Boag, is this:—He is the eldest son of a man of that class in life on which the highest encomiums have been passed by many of the first writers of their day, and which has even been selected as the one in which the greatest share of human happiness was to be found. Men who, as Sir Walter Scott says of English Yeomen—the class to which I allude—are

" England's peculiar and appropriate sons,
Known in no other land."

And afterwards in allusion to their patriotism,

" As men who have their portion in its plenty."

But Sir Walter is here alluding to times long since gone by; and although their patriotism remains, alas! their " plenty" is gone, and they appear likely to be swept from off the face of the earth. *Mr. Boag was swamped in the general wreck;* and with a praise-worthy solicitude for independence of mind, which no ill-fortune can destroy, is now obtaining an honest livelihood as huntsman to Sir Matthew White Ridley.

But let us turn away from the dark side of the picture, and remind Mr. Boag that necessity made the *first* sportsman, and will no doubt make many more; Mr. Boag, however, was *bred* a sportsman, as the following anecdote will show. His father kept hounds before him; and as some friends were dining with him one day after hunting, the pedigree of one of the pack was discussed, but none of the party could give it accurately. " Send your sister here (a girl of sixteen) said the father to one of the sons; " *she'll tell us,* I'll be bound;" which she immediately did. As for myself, I often amuse myself with thinking that the maxim of like begetting like, in animal economy, should be more considered than it is, with human beings who wish their descendants to excel in any particular calling; for no doubt blood tells here as well as in the brute race. Indeed it has been a matter of surprise to me, that such uncommon anxiety and care should have been bestowed in improving the breed of animals, and that a perfect

indifference and neglect should prevail in regard to the human race, which has no doubt degenerated within the last century or two, if not within my own time. For the sake of the sporting world, then, I hope the young lady in question married a sportsman, as there could be no doubt of the issue being "true on the line," as we say of good hounds.

A short time after the appointed hour, Mr. Ridley, who takes great interest in the hounds and is I am told a very popular and promising young sportsman, arrived, but his father, Sir Matthew, was absent from temporary indisposition. Mr. Ridley's manner pleased me; there was an unaffected open-heartedness about it, and he greeted his friends and brother sportsmen as a master of hounds ought to do. The field was any thing but numerous, and after exchanging a few words with those composing it, he thus addressed his huntsman, "Now, Boag, put on your spectacles*, and let us begin;" and we soon found ourselves in a cover of great extent, called Horsley-wood—one hundred and seven acres I was told, which the hounds had not as yet been in during the season, and Boag himself *never*.

As if by instinct, however, he threw his hounds into a corner of it in which there was a warm drag of a fox, and in less then ten minutes he was on foot. Nor was this the extent of his goodluck, or I might rather say of his merit. He got away with his fox in an extraordinary short time, considering the extent of the cover, and the fact of his never having been in it before; but owing to a puzzling check at a gentleman's house hard by, where the pack divided, and a very middling scent, he

* Mr. Boag is, what is termed, short-sighted, and wears a pair of extremely light steel-mounted spectacles.

was soon lost. A second fox was found in a neighbouring whin, Throckley-fell I think was the name of the place, which went gallantly away, and was, we understood, handsomely killed at the end of a fifty minutes hunting-run. Indeed as far as Mr. Surtees and myself could follow them with our eyes—having taken our stand upon rather elevated ground,—they appeared to be proceeding in a business-like manner, although with scarcely a holding, much less a burning, scent; but over as nice a country as any man could desire to hunt in. Either large grass, or light stubble, fields—the former chiefly—with by no means difficult fences, constitute the character of it, and on that subject no more need be said; but I was given to understand, that a great part of the country hunted by Sir Matthew Ridley's hounds wears the same favourable features.

It would be presumptuous in me to offer a remark on the form, character, or performances of these hounds, from the short time they were in my presence, and from the mere bird's-eye, consequently indistinct, view I had of them in chase; and especially so, as with our first fox, when I was able to see them in their work, one of those unlucky, but too frequent mishaps occurred, from which, neither fox-hunting nor any thing else is free: namely, an error in judgment on a doubtful point. Neither can I say more respecting their huntsman than I have said, excepting that, with his first fox, he had recourse to an expedient new to me, but which answered extremely well; and which I wonder is not oftener resorted to than it is, in covers of great extent. When he was sure his fox had broke cover, it was not that, as Scott says, he

> "——Gave his bugle-horn a blast
> That through the woodlands sounded far and wide;"

but he brought forth the most extraordinary notes I ever heard produced by that instrument, which were very well understood by his hounds. In fact, I took it for a *scream*, and observed to Mr Surtees "what an extraordinary pipe Mr. Boag has!" "It is his *horn*," said Mr. Ridley, who stood just before us in the ride. "*His fox is away.*"

Of the "turn out" of the Northumberland hounds, I have not much to say, but the servants' well cleaned leathers and boots, particularly at this early period of the season, when little worse for wear, gave it a neat appearance; but I cannot say so much for the nags. As for the mare Boag rode, unless she be one of those prodigies which we do now and then meet with in the field, lapped in a coal black skin, with a bushy mane and a thick tail, I should have expected her to have cried out for her "black-mamma," if the pace had been good; for she looked to have mistaken her calling. Respecting the man upon her back, there could be no mistake about him, for he has quite the look and character of a sportsman, and bears a striking resemblance to another sportsman, and a brother huntsman—the celebrated Mr. Osbaldeston. In fact, in size, form, seat on his horse, cut of his coat, sit of his cap, and even in profile, he is almost a fac-simile of him, although, in years, he has the advantage of "*the Squire.*"

I think it is Horace who says, that life is nothing without love and jokes, and I have ever been of his opinion. "There will be a very good fellow out to-morrow," said Mr. Surtees, Jun. to me, over night; "*Mr. Marley*, our great Newcastle tailor; I will introduce you to him *as a London gentleman who has never been out with hounds before*, and he will teach you a thing or two about hunting."—"Well," I replied, "as I have only a hack to ride, and shall be unknown to any one else,—although

we must recollect, that I have put it into the types, that perhaps the most intuitive knowledge of fox-hunting ever yet displayed is now being displayed by a tailor*—I can have no objection to so harmless a joke;" and it will also appear I think that Mr. Marley has gained something by his experience. The following dialogue then took place between us in the hunting field on this day.

Nimrod. "Well, Mr. Marley, this fox-hunting must be a noble diversion to such as are able to follow it."

Mr. Marley. "The finest in the world, sir! *the finest in the world, you may depend upon it.* I hunt twice a week, the season through, but never two days together, unless I get an order."

Nimrod. "But 'tis *dangerous*, is it not?"

Mr. Marley. "Not the least in the world—that is, if you have a good horse, and *know how to ride him.* I have rode this horse three seasons, twice a week with Sir Matthew, and he has never given me one fall."

Nimrod. "Will you allow me to ask you, Mr. Marley, what term you fox-hunters make use of, when the dogs run the same way as the wind blows?"

Mr. Marley. "Oh, we call that running *down wind.*"

Nimrod. "And what, if the dogs go t'other way?"

* Of course, I allude to Hastings, the Cheltenham tailor.

Mr. Marley. "What, against the wind?"

Nimrod. "Yes."

Mr. Marley. "Oh, of course, that's *up wind*."

Nimrod. "Bless me, I beg your pardon; how stupid I am to ask you such a question."

Mr. Marley. "Oh, not at all: you are not used to these things, I find."

Nimrod. "Now what do you call riding along-side the dogs?"

Mr. Marley. "We call that *cheeking them*."

Nimrod. "And what if you ride behind them?"

Mr. Marley. "Oh that's bad; but we call it riding on the line."

Now excuse the inadequacy of the metaphor, but I was about to say—"why not call it "*rumping them?*" when, afraid of driving the jest too far, I changed the nature of our discourse, not however without the reflection, that if every undergraduate at our universities were to go through his examination for his "Little-go" as well as Mr. Marley had gone through his, by me, one description of plucking would be at an end. Another reflection also presented itself:—It is one of the greatest compliments to fox-hunting, that it is the delight of every *condition*, and of every age; and there can be no reason why the man who makes the coat, should not be a sportsman as well as the man who wears it. Whether or

not Mr. Marley is a sportsman I had no opportunity of informing myself; but of this I am quite sure—he is an obliging, good-natured person, and "suum cuique," give every one his due—a most excellent tailor, of which I had proof in a pair of the best, and best fitting, dress trousers, I ever put upon my person, in my life.

I have now little more to say of my agreeable visit to Hamsterley than that, on my departure from it, the *command* was repeated that I should revisit it on my return, but circumstances placed it out of my power to do so. I had the pleasure of spending one day at Elswick with Mr. Hodgson, M. P. for Newcastle, an old friend and schoolfellow of Mr. Surtees, Jun., a gentleman of considerable talent and information; and of spirit too, as will be allowed, I think, when I state that when barely of age he contested the large and populous town of Newcastle against the former members, who had so long represented it that it was then almost regarded as their own borough. He has a splendid house within two miles of Newcastle, a town in which there appears to be as much business stirring as in any other that I could name, if not somewhat more. But it is a devilishly Tartarus-like looking place, and whoever lives in it with a view of making a fortune, should not be long about it.

On Saturday, the 8th, I accompanied Mr. Surtees in his carriage to Newcastle, for the purpose of pursuing my journey, and at twelve o' clock was seated on the box of the *Royal William* coach (I like that name too,) which starts at that hour for Berwick upon Tweed. It was now I found that I had taken leave of coaching, in any thing like its proper form—at least for some time to come; for the horses were slow, the coachman slower; and the stupid, uncoachmanlike, unsafe practice of running the leaders' reins through the throat-latches, instead of the head terrets of the

wheel-horses, was the order of the day. On my demanding a reason for it, I was told, "it was more *gain*" when the horses gallop." "Gallop!" said I; "why *you never gallop do you?*" "A wee bit now and then," was the reply; but this was not one of his "now and then" days, for I saw none of it. But this I saw; I saw the ring of his off wheeler's hames nearly worn through, and all I got for directing his attention to it was—"Wall, to be sure, 'tis no good; but it will hawd (hold) on yet." The prettiest things I saw in this day's journey were, the iron gates into Sir Matthew Ridley's park, at Blagdon, certainly a chef d'œuvre of the sort; and a sirloin of roast beef at Alnwick, where the coach stopped to dine. I was disappointed in not finding more turnips than I did, between Morpeth and Alnwick, and surprised at seeing a great deal of poor land. I could see nothing of Alnwick-castle, for it was getting dark when we passed it; but I saw a pillar erected by the noble owner's tenants, which is rightly called "The Farmer's Folly."

They had better have kept their money in their pockets to help them to grow wheat at four shillings the bushel, but I suppose they would have thought you mad if you had told them it would ever have come to this. Finding I had nothing to learn from the coachman of the Royal William, and nothing to look at, as night came on, I got inside of the drag the remainder of the road to Berwick, and, like Ulysses in Ithaca, arrived in Scotland asleep. When I come to recount some of my doings there, it may appear almost miraculous that I came out of it awake.

It has been justly observed that "Scott directed all men's eyes to the Borders;" but, wizard as he was, he could not transport their bodies thither *scot free*, or I should have been booked by that coach long ago. Never, then, having before visited this interesting portion of his Majesty's dominions, yet having lived on terms of great intimacy with a friend, now gathered to his fathers, who possessed a fishery under its walls which netted him six hundred pounds a year, and an estate hard by of nearly as many thousands (but who, like myself, had never seen either), I had heard so much of Berwick-upon-Tweed from himself, and of *Barrick* from his Scotch bailiff, that I was wofully disappointed when I looked out of my window on the morrow, at the mean and sombre appearance of this neither Scotch nor English town. Nevertheless, its being one of the few British towns surrounded by walls, and I believe the only one by those in a regular state of fortification—in addition to its "old-soldier-like accuracy of deportment," and its association with deeds of days long since gone by, renders it an object of no common interest. The walls I, of course, explored—and a delightful walk they afford; as likewise the bridge over the Tweed, which is one of the finest I have ever seen, consisting of upwards of a dozen arches, and those of great span. I then returned to my inn with a good appetite for my breakfast; and, although I as yet only considered myself on the Border, when I saw it on the table I thought of a question I had seen put in some book or other—"What gluttony can compete with a breakfast in Scotland?"

"Any coach to Dunse, to-day?" said I to the waiter, as he was in the act of making my tea. "Nay, nay," he replied, with a significant shake of the head; "there's na coach out of Barrick to-day; *'tis the Sabbath!*" "All the better for the cattle and the coachman," said I to

myself; "but all the worse for my pocket. Order me a chaise at two;" and at two I was on my road to Dunse.

I believe I once made the remark, in allusion to my contributions to periodicals, that of those which had been most approved by the public, the matter generally presented itself to me in the rough when either in the saddle or on a coach-box. But I cannot say as much of that—to me—most disagreeable vehicle, the "yellow post chaise," about every part of which there is a jumbling and a jingling enough to disturb brains steadier and staider than mine are. Nevertheless, there is no putting the drag on the *animus*,—even Morpheus himself can scarcely do this; and during the hour and half that I spent in this state of purgatory, a sort of conversation was going on between the outer and the inner man.

"Here I am," said the one to the other, "πέραν τϐ ποταμϐ—on t'other side of *the* river—and, for the first time in my life, in the land of—*what?* Of cakes! Yes, of cakes; and what is heartier food than good oaten cake, for horse, hound, hog, goose, or man? In the land of bonnets? Yes—Highland, and Lowland, but I don't fancy them; fitter for women than for men; too much of the "redimicula mitræ" about them. Of plaids? Yes—quite classical; "gentemque togatam!" In the land of hospitality? From all I have heard, equal to that of the ancient Germans, who, Tacitus says, looked out of their doors before they shut up their houses at night, to see if any stranger was coming. "A pleasing reflection this five hundred miles from home," whispered the inner man. In the land of hunting? Yes; for one of their kings, Alexander the Third we are told, hunted Forfarshire; and who could wind a horn with Robert Bruce? I am little read in Gaelic antiquities, but this Alexander must have been a prince of hunters, for it

appears he gave £4. 7s. for a hound bitch and her seven whelps, an enormous price in those days. Indeed, if my memory serves me, he is called "the king of hunters" in the romance of Sir Tristrem, in which the science of hunting is dwelt upon with a minuteness that shows how highly it ranked among the accomplishments of a brave and gentle knight.

Now here finishes this loose reverie, the object of which is merely to show that I entered the country with a favourable impression of what I should find it, although when a man's mind has been humanized, as mine has been, by an intercourse with the world, local prejudices affect it but little. Certainly, the primitive idea one forms of Scotland is, an assemblage of woods, mountains, rivers, and lakes, "montesque, amnesque, lacusque," as Ovid said of another country; but when I looked out of the window of the yellow post chaise, I saw a country, between Berwick and Dunse, that looked very much like hunting.

As may be supposed, the first thing I did on my arrival at Dunse was to have a peep at the two horses the "would-be Tilbury" had sent me, and at the servant that accompanied them, and who was to fill the double capacity of groom and valet. The latter turned out what he appeared to be, a steady good servant; but I was greatly disappointed in the horses. They were two undersized powerless brutes, not deserving the name or character of hunters, but coming under the denomination of Irish garrons, which they in reality were. "Ah, Mr. King," said I to myself,—for that is the owner's name—"if you send your customers such horses as these at ten pounds a month each, and all expences to be paid by the hirer, your game will soon be played." My next step was to inquire where I was to be myself put up, for, although the horses were at the

Black Bull, that house was full; when I found apartments had been taken for me at the White Swan, and of which,—although, like all other White Swans, nothing out of the common way—I had no reason to complain. Moreover, the landlord is a sportsman, and that, like charity, covers many sins. However, on my departure, I gave mine host of each house a hint which it is not *necessary* to mention here, but which must be attended to against another hunting season; and it was promised such should be the case.

As the town of Dunse has been called the "Melton Mowbray of the North," a short description of it may be required. Were I to give it by word of mouth, I should say "it is not a bad sort of a dull-looking country town," looking perhaps duller than common in the cut-throat month of November. Although it takes its name from the Celtic word *Dun*, a hill, it stands on quite level ground; but as it is said to swarm with lawyers, it may be no misnomer after all. Its size may be guessed at from the number of its inhabitants, which are somewhere about three thousand; and it has been the birth-place of several eminent men. The new Town-house is certainly a handsome building, and there is a health-giving Spa in the neighbourhood, of whose virtues, however, I am unable to speak, as, during the month I spent at this "Melton Mowbray of the North," I never drank aqua pura, much less aqua medicata.

In less than an hour after my arrival at Dunse I went to seek for Lord Elcho. And where did I find him? In splendid apartments, fitting and becoming the heir apparent to the Earl of Wemyss, one of the wealthiest noblemen in all Scotland, and himself residing—when at home—at Amisfield, in East Lothian, one of the finest and largest mansions in that

aristocratic and richly peopled county? Oh no—and here is one of the distinguishing features in fox-hunting, highly complimentary to it—I found him in a small brick house, with one window to a room, much such a one as a master mechanic might be expected to be found in; but which now appeared to afford all the comforts of a palace. His lordship received me with the greatest kindness, and invited me to dinner on the same day at the Black Bull, where he told me the few gentlemen who were then arrived in the town were to assemble, previously to the opening of the campaign in the Dunse country on the morrow.

People may say what they will to the contrary, but I am quite satisfied there is no passion so universal as the vanity of being known to the rest of mankind, howsoever diversified or disguised under different forms and appearances. An humble individual as I am, I was at this time better known to Lord Elcho than Lord Elcho was known to me. In fact my knowledge of his lordship only extended to my having met him in the field in Leicestershire, in which county all the sporting world know he resided for several seasons, distinguishing himself as a horseman amongst the best of the best. His character there was—"who can beat Elcho, if he gets a start?" In private life also he is equally hard to beat; and as a friend and a companion, his universal popularity in his own country and in others renders it unnecessary for me to speak of him. But what said they of him in Leicestershire as *a sportsman*? Why, what the late Mr. Meynell said of John Lockley—"riding was his forte;" and I doubt not, from all I have heard of his lordship in that country, that, cum multis aliis, he voted hounds a bore *unless they went fast enough for him*. But this seeming indifference to hunting—this apparent preference of the horse to the hound, of the horseman to the sportsman, could not continue long in a man like Lord Elcho, who was from his youth a

sportsman in every other acceptation of that word; and here comes the proof. On quitting Leicestershire, he set up a pack of harriers in Scotland and hunted them himself for three successive seasons. Whether or not at the time of his doing so, his lordship had any intention of keeping fox-hounds in Scotland, and hunting them himself, it is out of my power to determine; but of this I am certain, that nothing would be more likely to qualify a hard-riding Leicestershire gentleman for that office, than to witness the patience and perseverance of a close-hunting pack of harriers (for, after all, hunting is but hunting), and the ill effects of pressing upon and over-riding them when in their work. If I may be allowed such an expression, they would bring his lordship's head down together with their own; and instead of looking, as when in Leicestershire, for the weakest place in a bull-finch, or for the soundest bank of a brook, he would be admiring Bonny-bell and Beauty, and the short turn they were making, and also thinking within himself whether they would make it good over the foil. But to cease my conjectures and turn to facts. Lord Elcho, dropping his harriers and flying at nobler game, got together, in a shorter time than were ever before got together, a hard working and steady pack of fox-hounds, hunted by himself*. It must be observed, that when I first saw them they had only been at work one season and a half, which must be allowed to be very young days; but with a person at their head whose heart and soul is in the sport, they will progress rapidly towards perfection. Indeed, Lord Kintore wrote me word lately of his having been paying a visit to his brother huntsman at Amisfield—confirming every word which I have advanced as to the rapid formation of the pack, and adding the important fact of Lord Elcho's

* His lordship commenced his first season with a huntsman, but he broke his leg in a fall, and died.

having, this year, put forward five couples of young hounds of his own breeding, which, his lordship adds, do him credit.

The dinner party this day (Sunday, 9th November) at the Black Bull was small, consisting only of Lord Elcho, Mr. Hay of Dunse-castle, Mr. Campbell of Saddell, and myself; but we were gratified during the evening by the appearance of Lord Saltoun and Mr. Mc Dowal Grant, for whose reception a house had been taken in the town, and whose horses had been awaiting their arrival. That kindred feeling which exists amongst sportsmen would have put me at ease in such society as this had I been a stranger to all, but it so happened that—to my no small loss—Mr. Campbell was the only one of the party to whom I was quite unknown. Mr. Hay I had visited when he hunted Warwickshire. Lord Saltoun—" the Hero of Hougomont," as Lord Kintore calls him—I had met at Melton just twenty-two years before, being the last season of his hunting there; and of Mr. Mc Dowal Grant's hospitality I had partaken when himself, Captain Ross, and Mr. Francis Grant kept " a roaring house" together, at Melton, in 1818. Our dinner was of the old fox-hunter's stamp—plain roast and boiled, but every thing good of its sort, and the claret such as might be expected Mr. George Wauchope, of Leith, would send to his *brother sportsmen* at Dunse; or Messrs. Hope and Bruce, of the same place, to their countrymen and friends.

Monday, 10th.—This was a day of no small interest to me, as it was the first of my seeing hounds in Scotland, and the second of my seeing them any where else for nearly five years. The fixture was Greenburn, about four miles from Dunse, in a hilly and bad country. We had a pretty find with the first fox, and a chance of a run, as he broke cover favourably; but being headed by a boy, he put his head down wind over

light plough, and was soon lost. We had two brace of foxes more on foot in the course of the day, but could do nothing for want of the needful. In fact it was not a hunting day; and perhaps well for me it was not, for I found the horse I rode had no pretensions to following hounds, and particularly in that country, where wind and speed—of which he possessed neither—were wanted. One of the beauties of fox-hunting, however, consists in the pleasure of the day not being entirely dependant on good sport, which neither hounds nor country can command; and the agrémens of society also make some amends. For example, an excellent anecdote was this day told me of that celebrated sportsman, the late Mr. Baird (father of Sir David), who for many years kept hounds in Scotland. There is in the neighbourhood of Greenburn—or speaking more classically, as the place is renowned in history,—there is in Lammermuir a very high hill called Cockburn Law, which, however, foxes often face before hounds. On one of these occasions, a smart young writer from Edinburgh brought his horse to a standstill in attempting to follow them over it, and being a tyro in the art, thought he was dying on the spot. "Oh Mr. Baird," exclaimed he, as that gentleman gave him the go by, "what *can* be the matter with my horse?" "Nothing at all, sir, replied Mr. Baird, "*he has only got Cockburn Law in his throat.*" A better definition of a blown horse, and an inexperienced horseman, could not possibly have been given, and the readiness with which it was produced added to its effect. "How did you get over that stile?" said I myself, some years back to a London gentleman, whom I had left making his third attempt to leap one, at the top of a sticking hill with the Surrey subscription hounds. "Not at all," was his reply; "and is it not very odd? for my horse leaps the bar in the top pole, in the ride of the stables where he stands." "By no means odd," said I, "there are no Surrey hills in that ride."

Our party at dinner this day—at the White Swan, for each house had the benefit in its turn—was increased by the presence of the Earl of Eglinton and Lord Archibald Seymour, (one of the sons of the Duke of Somerset,) the two Messrs. Fletchers, of Saltoun, (descendants of the patriotic Andrew, who made such a noise in the world some hundred and thirty years back,) and Mr. M'Kenzie Grieve, late of the Horse Guards Blue. To this last named gentleman I was not altogether a stranger, for we had met in the field in the south, and the last time of our meeting was impressed upon our memories by the not very comfortable reflection that his horse died on the evening of the run; and that mine was obliged to be left under the care of a veterinary surgeon, for three days, before he could get back to his stable. But let this be washed in Lethe and forgotten; the only sting that fox-hunting can leave in the breast of a man who can feel, is the reflection, that when he himself may have been most gratified in the enjoyment of it, pain and sufferings will occasionally be inflicted by it, on that paragon of animals, the horse. But for this, it would be one of the balsams of life.

A writer without freedom is a writer without interest; and I must here claim the privilege which has been before so generously granted to me, in the recapitulation of what I have seen and heard on my various Tours, and for which I can only offer the following excuse:—Time and place are of themselves but secondary links in the operation of events, actions and *persons* being the principal sources of interest. It can be but a brief and rapid sketch of each individual whom I may venture to introduce here; but as I cannot like Cæsar make a history of my own exploits, what should I be without such themes for my pen? Like Æsop's fly on the axle of the chariot wheel, vainly imagining that *he* was kicking up the dust. In all these matters, however, there is a delicate

and honourable reserve that never should, and by me never shall, for a moment be lost sight of or forgotten.

With which then of these Caledonian sportsmen shall I open the ball? With Lord Elcho of course, as a master of hounds and a huntsman, for of his private character I need say no more. In the first-named station, also, as master of hounds, it is scarcely necessary to add, that Lord Elcho is popular to the extreme of popularity itself, inasmuch as his chief objects are, to oblige his field and to show sport. Then his free, unassuming, and conciliating manners, happily blended with the carriage and deportment of the well-bred gentleman, would complete the picture were there not one more feature in it which I cannot allow to remain in the back ground. I allude to his total abandonment of—to say the least of it—the unmannerly, and, as far as my experience has led me, nearly useless, practice of "blowing up" (as the term is) his field, for any little indiscretion they may be guilty of. I appeal to all my brother sportsmen who have occasionally put themselves in such a situation, whether a gentle and private reproof has not double the force of a loud and public rebuke, although I admit the necessity of exerting authority in a manner void of offence. Those words of caution, "*Pray*, sir, hold hard," should check any man who wishes to see a run, and all those who do not had much better remain at home.

But there are other qualifications than gentlemanlike deportment and command of temper, essential to excellence in what are termed gentlemen huntsmen, and it is in that capacity that I am now about to speak of Lord Elcho. There is a temperament and a constitution peculiarly adapted to it, and without which excellence is rarely obtained. The one should be ardent, and the other should be strong; and both are combined in him.

Of the truth of this assertion, I shall satisfy my readers in a very few words. When he is not with his hounds he is shooting; when he is not shooting he is fishing; and he is one of the best walkers of his day. But I will first mention one day's sport he indulged himself in, which may be called a practical climax. During the time he had his harriers, he killed two hares with good runs with them in the morning; saw a fox killed, after a good run, with the Duke of Buccleuch's pack at noon; and then killed nine salmon in the Tweed, before he sat down to dinner! So much for an ardent temperament, and ditto for a good constitution.

It has been truly said by Dr. Johnson, that "those who attain excellence generally spend life in one pursuit, for excellence is not often gained upon easier terms." Now although Lord Elcho has been a sportsman ever since by the course of nature he could have been a sportsman, yet when he came under my observation, he had not had more than one year's experience as huntsman to a pack of fox-hounds; and it would be too much to expect that, even with all the requisite qualifications I have given him, he should prove an absolute exception to this rule. But this much I will venture to predict of him,—strengthened by the opinion of others better able to judge of them than myself—that *experience* alone is wanting to put him upon a par with any other person in his calling. There is a quickness of decision in his movements in the field, which, tempered and chastened by the before-mentioned excellent schoolmaster, is one of the chief qualifications of the fox-*hunter*, and without which, on certain days, a good fox cannot be *handsomely* killed, let hounds be never so good. His lordship's fine horsemanship likewise gives him no small advantage here, as, barring accidents, his eye is never off his leading hounds in their work, and he has a very good man behind him, in his first whip, Joe Hogg, who appears as keen for the sport as his master.

By the bye, an anecdote in confirmation of this may not be amiss here. "Joe," said I to him one day, "how did you feel when you were following my lord over that bog?" "Lord, sir," he replied, "why I expected to be swallowed up alive every jump my horse took; but what was to be done? the hounds was running right into him." The bog was a mile and a half across, and just sufficiently frozen to admit of their horses leaping from one tussuck of grass to another.

I am travelling without my host; I have said nothing of Lord Elcho's hounds; but the best comment upon their character will be found in the sport they showed, which will be noticed in due course. I have no list of them, none having been published whilst I was at Dunse, neither are such things often published so early in the season, for reasons that are obvious to all who follow hounds. Their kennel is about a mile from the town, but various occupations prevented my seeing it. I believe it is only a temporary one, but from the condition and general soundness of the hounds I should imagine it to be healthy, which is worth all the ornaments of architecture put together. The stables, made by Lord Elcho, are in the town of Dunse, and afford every accommodation to a numerous stud of hunters—the ten for his own riding, *clippers*. His lordship's weight does not exceed twelve stone with his saddle, which gives him great advantage; and he is just now in the prime of life, which a man ought to be to follow hounds, still more to hunt them four or five days a week, in any country, and particularly in so deep and so strongly fenced a one as Berwickshire is.

Of Lord Saltoun I need say but little:

"For high and deathless is the name
Oh Hougomont! thy ruins claim;

The sound of Cressey none shall own,
And Agincourt shall be unknown;
And Blenheim be a nameless spot,
Long ere thy glories are forgot."

These are the words of his countryman Scott, and proud must he have been of the honourable association. Yet, though Lord Saltoun is a hero fit for the pages of Plutarch, it is not as a hero that I have now to speak of him, but in the milder sphere of private life,—as a gentleman, a companion, a sportsman, and a friend. And here he needs neither a Plutarch nor a Scott. Whoever knows him, has but one opinion of him, —that he is, in homely language, "one of the best fellows in the world;" and gives the lie to the assertion, that what raises the hero generally sinks the man. Although he was obliged to give up hunting for many years on account of a badly fractured thigh, there is no man fonder of the sport, and no man rode harder than he did over Leicestershire, particularly on his famous horse Spot, which I now have in my mind's eye. But it is not in the field alone he shines; who can beat Lord Saltoun over the mahogany? I would go in the Diligence from hence to Paris—and God knows that would be a high price for me to pay—who have an abhorrence of all such conveyances—to hear him sing "The Man with the Wooden leg." Independently of the humour with which he sings it, the song itself is most irresistibly ludicrous; and talk of the unities of a poem, I never met with any in which they are better preserved than they are in this. As I received a kind invitation from his lordship to visit him in the summer and enjoy with him the sports of flood and field, I hope once more to hear the adventures of the one-legged man; and were I not assured that no praise of mine could add a feather to a plume so full as his, I should think I had already said too much of this illustrious Scotchman.

Who comes next? A master of fox-hounds should take the precedence of all others when *Nimrod* writes, and therefore I introduce to my readers who may not be acquainted with him, a gentleman known in Warwickshire (which county he hunted three seasons in first-rate style) as Mr. Hay, but in Scotland as "Willie Hay," of Dunse-castle; and if I could but persuade myself to believe—with a little addition to it—in the doctrine of metempsychosis, or exchange of souls, I should boldly assert, that "*Mr.* Hay" in England, and "*Willie* Hay" in Scotland could not be the same man. But in what consists the fancied transfiguration? Why the character of Mr. Hay in Warwickshire—and I appeal to my brother sportsmen there, if such it was not—was that of a good sportsman, a well-bred gentleman, an agreeable companion; and that was all. Perhaps he acted the part of the cautious hound on a ticklish scenting day, and on fresh ground, and left it to others to throw their tongues on the hazard; but this I can say, on my own experience of this highly respected gentleman on both sides of the Tweed, that Willie Hay, north of *the* river, is worth a dozen Mr. Hays south of it. That in one, he was merely the agreeable companion; on the other he is the life and soul of every party he is in;—the best teller of a story, with the best stock of anecdotes, and with as much of the original character of his country about him, as any man I am acquainted with. That he is a horseman of the first order, I need not trouble myself to assert; and although not so splendidly mounted as he was when he hunted Warwickshire, he can now "do the trick" when he likes his horse. In a letter I had from Mr. Maxwell, (eldest son of Sir William Maxwell,) after I left Dunse, describing a capital run of an hour and twenty minutes with Lord Elcho, from Press, he concludes by saying that "Hay had the best of it upon Crafty."

Like most of those nags who "have the best of it" at the end of an hour and twenty minutes, Crafty is quite thorough-bred and so is his rider; being distinguished among the Hays—nearly as numerous in Scotland, by the bye, as the Jones's are in Wales—as Hay of Drumelzier, shows that he has the Tweedle blood on one side, and the Hays of Berwickshire, it is well known, were among the most conspicuous of the border chiefs who, amidst feudal broils and foreign wars, rendered themselves remarkable in the annals of their country. Perhaps it was to be attributed to his being thus bred—a scion of this gallant but turbulent aristocracy—that the gentleman I am speaking of chose to be an amateur spectator of the bloody scenes on the plains of Waterloo, where I am sorry to add his younger brother was killed. This must have been a woful set-off against the satisfaction and the recollection of that glorious victory. But what said the angel to the Peri, at the gates of Heaven?

"Sweet," said the angel, as she gave
The gift into his radiant hand,
"Sweet is our welcome of the brave,
Who die thus for their native land."

I have now to speak of another very celebrated character in Lord Elcho's hunt, equally as well known at Melton, but where he never happened to be whilst I was there, which accounts for our having been strangers to each other previously to our meeting at Dunse. I allude to Mr. Campbell, the Laird of Saddell, and perhaps better known among his friends by his territorial title of "Saddell," than by his real and proper name. But this is not the first time I have had Mr. Campbell in "the book." I got a dressing, I remember, some few years back, from a newspaper critic, who felt squeamish at part of a song I had quoted,

describing a run over Leicestershire, in which his horse was represented to be a good deal the worse for having gone " the pace" for best part of an hour with sixteen stone on his back. But it is not only as a good sportsman—as one very fond of hounds, and a very superior horseman that I have to represent Mr. Campbell. It is said that the gods, having taken pity on the race of mortals, born to evil as the sparks fly upwards, have given them the Muses, and Apollo their leader, and Bacchus their friend, not only to amuse them, but also to reform their manners, and soften their souls; and here we have their representative in the Laird of Saddell*. We have the poet, the songster, the jovial companion, the sportsman, and the horseman, all combined in one man, and that is saying as much as I need say although I could say more. There is more of the gaiety of Anacreon in Mr. Campbell's character than I ever remember to have met with before, and he has poetical talent that might have been turned to a good account had he been obliged to make use of it. He could have written the Pythic ode, and have sung it afterwards.

But my readers shall not take all this on my word alone; I will give them a specimen of his lyrick muse in an off-hand song he made one night in 1833, at Rossie Priory—the seat of Lord Kinnaird—on the occasion of a famous run he had seen in the morning with Mr. Dalyell's hounds, in Forfarshire, and which he sings most delightfully to the tune of, " We have been Friends together," on the words of which it will be perceived to be somewhat of a parody. It is dedicated to Walter Gilmour, Esq. of Melton celebrity, who enjoyed the sport with him.

* I need scarcely inform such enlightened readers as mine are, that the allusion to Bacchus is only to be considered in its proper light—as the inspirer of poetry. Parnassus was sacred to Bacchus as well as to Apollo; and Horace says he is justly in the train of the Muses as Cupid is in that of his mother, without whose aid, she herself confesses, she can do but little execution.

" We have seen a run together,
We have ridden side by side;
It binds us to each other
Like a lover to his bride.
We have seen a run together
When the hounds run far and fast,
We have harken'd by each other,
To the huntsman's cheering blast.
How gay they bustled round him,
How gallantly they found him,
And how stealthily he wound him,
O'er each break and woody dell.

" 'Twas from Keithwick Broom we view'd him,
As he stole along the vale;
Though we cheerily hallooed him,
'Twas to him a deadly wail;
By Lintrose we did pursue him
Despite each fence and rill,
Till his heart began to rue him
On Haliburton hill.
Oh, how they sped together,
O'er the moor among the heather,
Like birds of the same feather.
And their music like a bell.

" By Auckter House we hied him,
Still haunted by their cry;
Till in Belmont park we spied him,
And we knew that he must die!

Through the hedge he made one double,
As his sinking soul did droop,
'Twas the ending of his trouble,
When we gave the shrill *Who-whoop!*
Oh, now then let us rally,
Let us toast the joyous tally,
And a bumper to our ally,
The gallant John Dalyell."

I must be allowed to dwell a little on this scent. Mr. Campbell, when dressed at night in his scarlet coat, with green facings, and buff et cæteras (the Buccleuch hunt uniform), is one of the finest and handsomest men in his Majesty's dominions; and as along with this pleasing exterior he unites, when in the happy mood, colloquial accomplishments of the first order, *and a song for asking for*, it is almost needless to observe, that his presence is always hailed as a surety for an agreeable evening. Judging from his stud, I am bound to consider him a first-rate judge of a horse, for it contained some excellent specimens of the only sort of animal that can be depended upon to carry such a weight as his, in the front rank—namely on very short legs, not exceeding fifteen hands three inches in height and some less than that, very well-bred, very steady in their work, and very strong. During his last visit to Melton—and I believe he spent the whole of the season before the last in Leicestershire—he tried I was told an experiment in crossing the country, that his friends say did not answer. This was making his horses leap *into*, and not *over* the fences, with the idea of economizing their powers by lessening their bodily exertion; but I have reason to believe it was the occasion of many falls.

The Earl of Eglinton, who stands next on my list of the sojourners at Dunse, rented for the season, the beautiful cottage at the head of the lake in Dunse-park, the residence of Mrs. Hay's mother; and had for his guest Lord Archibald Seymour, and also occasionally Mr. Charles Lamb, his lordship's half-brother. Lord Eglinton's start in life (for he is only in his twenty-fourth year) has been a good one. He has entered with spirit into the sports and amusements of the country, which of itself makes a young nobleman popular; but when united, as in his case, with amiable and unassuming manners, and an evident wish that others should participate in the bountiful fortune he is heir to, has rendered him one of the most popular young men in Scotland. I was told, before I came to his country, and by one who is an excellent judge, that I should find him "a promising young one, *and very fond on't*," (i. e. of fox-hunting,) and such, truly, did I find him, to the very extent and spirit of the letter. He is a very hard rider, (not so well mounted, by the bye, as I would be, were I Earl of Eglinton; but Rome was not built in a day,) and very fond of racing, and of the practical part of it also, for he has often ridden his own horses and won on them, when the weight would allow; but his lordship approaches to the "welter," and an earl's table with a French cook, is a bad school for wasting. His friend Lord Archibald Seymour is equally fond of hounds; indeed, I should rather say more so than his noble friend is, never missing a day with them, how great soever the distance, or how rough soever the morning; and, what is a sure and infallible sign of it, on not the best of cattle. Likewise, as birds of a feather flock together, there is in this young nobleman, a similarly unassuming demeanour, which, after all, is the surest sign of high birth. It is with men as with horses, 'tis the cocktail that throws up his head and kicks, but is generally found wanting at the pinch.

But amidst this glitter of coronets, I must not overlook "Charley Lamb," as the half brother to Lord Eglinton is called by all his family and all his friends; and when I state that, what the lexicographer would designate as "the termination *ly*," added to the Christian name of a Scotchman, has the signification of something out of the common way, (Johnny Campbell of Saddell, and Willy Hay of Dunse-castle, par example), I trust I shall be excused for this familiar mention of Mr. Lamb's name. And in truth, there is a great deal out of the common way about this young gentleman, inasmuch as he is gifted with that rare quality yclept *dry humour*. In my opinion, it is the very best kind of wit a man can possess, for being seldom exercised but when he is called upon to rally, it is seldom used but in self-defence. But this is a digression. The first time I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Lamb was at dinner at Lord Eglinton's, and as it happened we occupied adjoining chairs. "I am in the wrong box," said I to myself, "I am seated next to a young scion of nobility, wrapped up in the mantle of aristocracy (for as yet I had not heard the sound of his voice) and I would as soon be near to a mad bull." Now see the folly of trusting to first impressions. The very first time Mr. Lamb opened his mouth, not to eat, but to speak, I discovered my mistake. There was a peculiar style of expressing himself, which although it defies the power of the pen, I may be able to exemplify by calling it that cautious use of the tongue, which, whilst uttering something that has more meaning in it than it appears to have, insidiously provokes a reply. But it is in the power of reply that Mr. Lamb shines, and although Milton makes the devil at a loss for an answer, I never saw him "stand perplexed," and I believe he is often put to the test. As amongst a multitude of proofs, one does the business, I will give an instance of this difficult and rare talent. "Why dont you send Charley to sea?" said a right ho-

nourable old maid one day, to the countess his mother; "it is very bad for a young man to be idling away his time at home." After a short pause, "Charley" himself furnished the answer, to which his peculiar slow and measured tone must have given a double force. "Do you not think," said he, "*the stomach pump would do as well?*" I call this an excellent specimen of harmless irony, as well as a happy mixture of the satirical with the simple, which is the highest point of perfection in every attempt at wit.

The two Mr. Fletchers (I dont like the word "Messrs." it smells so of the shop) are brothers in blood, and brothers in soul, for I believe it is difficult to say which is fondest of fox-hunting. They are distinguished as Mr. Fletcher of Saltoun, and Mr. Fletcher Campbell, whose residence is at Boquhar, near Stirling, a seat of great antiquity, having within its grounds the famous ford at which Prince Charles crossed the river. Both brothers are hard riders, and *good* over a country, particularly Mr. Fletcher Campbell, who struck me as being very *au fait* at handing his horse over the double fences in Berwickshire, without taking much out of him in the exertion.

Of Mr. M'Dowall Grant I have before spoken, and I have only here to mention that himself and Lord Saltoun (he married his Lordship's sister) kept house together in Dunse, and their studs were partly supplied from their own stables, and partly from that of Mr. King of Edinburgh, from whom I had my garrons. Mr. Grant is a fine horseman over a country and also over a race course; I should say about as quick a man over the former as is to be found in most shires, and, what cannot be said of all the quick ones I have seen and heard of, he will try to be "with them" on any horse, good or bad, accounting three falls in a

run nothing, provided he gets to the end of it. He rides light, with a very good hand and well steeled nerve, which every man should have who rides straight over Berwickshire, as I shall soon make apparent.

But I have now a phenomenon to present to my readers—at least if I rightly comprehend the meaning and derivation of that word. This is the — to me — most striking fact of as strong a horseman as I have ever seen in a saddle, in the person of a man weighing not more than nine stone, jockey weight; and this person is Mr. M'Kenzie Grieve, late of the Horse Guards Blue, but now residing upon his property near Dunse, and of whom I spoke before. But when I am here speaking of a strong horseman, dont let it be supposed that I am merely alluding to that power of hand and seat which can restrain the race horse in his course, but which in the difficulties that such a rider over a country as Mr. Grieve is exposed to, have been found nine times out of ten of no avail; but I am alluding to that command of a resisting force from the saddle which enables a man to recover his horse from difficulties which appear perfectly insurmountable; and likewise to be immoveable from his seat—as I shall presently show is Mr. Grieve's case—by the most violent and unlooked for shock that the body of a horse can encounter without its being dashed to atoms. It might well be asked, whence the fulcrum from which this lever power is derived? The question would best be answered by an anatomical section of Mr. Grieve's person, which, for a horseman, is perfect symmetry. He has not only that length of fork which affords the clip, or gripe, that renders him immoveable from his seat, but he has the true horseman's thigh, well hollowed out within, with strongly developed muscles without. Now having said this much in praise of Mr. Grieve as a horseman, I wish I could continue in the same strain of commen-

dation of him as a rider to hounds; but it *grieves* me to say (excuse the wretched pun) he is too severe on his horse to be sure of getting to the end of a run over such a country as Berwickshire, let his horse be what he may, short of celestial breed. As to himself stopping before his horse stops, I should as soon expect to see the sun stop; and as for falls, he appeared to me sometimes to seek them; but he will be obliged to concede one point:—No horse, after going a certain time, can leap a large fence, or, at all events, many large fences, if ridden over deep ground at the unmerciful pace Mr. Grieve goes over it, and occasionally with too slack a rein. I draw upon my own experience for the truth of this assertion; but if proof of it were wanting, it would be found in the fact of about five falls, per day, being about the average number this gallant horseman gets with hounds when they have a run; and were it not that Fortune favours the brave, he must have broken his neck or his limbs before this time.

I must now get into the field again. Tuesday, November 11th, being a *dies non* with Lord Elcho's hounds, his Lordship went in pursuit of wild geese, and Lord Saltoun, Mr. M'Dowall Grant and myself breakfasted at the cottage (Lord Eglinton's) on our road to meet Mr. Hume's harriers, which were at that time under the controul of Mr. Hay, by reason of that gentleman's temporary absence from home. As we mustered rather a strong field, being joined by the young noblemen of the cottage, Mr. Hay, and Mr. M'Kenzie Grieve, who met us on the ground, we were anxious for a good day's sport, but in this we were disappointed, for the hares were bad, the scent bad, and the country worse than all. The horse I rode (one of Mr. Grant's) was twice on his head in a bog; in fact it appeared to me to be better adapted to grouse-shooting than to hare-hunting, being chiefly moors, and we saw several

packs of grouse. Mr. Grieve did not lose his character this day; for, although mounted on a thorough-bred weed of a thing that could have run away from every horse out, over the hills, but had no pretensions to be called a hunter—indeed he did not call him one—he charged a gate with him on a road, and fell neck and croup over it, getting rather a hard squeeze, which he felt for some days.

I have but little to say of these harriers of Mr. Hume's, which appeared to be nearly as wild as the country in which they hunted, and so far characteristic; nor was the whipper-in by any means an exotic, for he looked as if just fresh from the toils, or what coachmen call a "fresh catched one." But there was something of the *lusus* about the mare he rode, as well as about himself; for although from her appearance she ought to have been leading lime to the farm in a one-horse cart, she galloped well and fast. Now that is the sort of animal to breed a hunter to carry weight, by a well bred horse, because her coarse points do not impede her action, and there is no carrying weight without coarse points.

Although it could not be said of this day,

"That Phœbus befriended our earlier roam,"

or, that

"Luna took care in conducting us home:"

yet amends were made in the evening by an agreeable dinner party at Dunse-castle, which was enlivened by the presence of several young ladies who were staying in the house, in addition to those of Mr. Hay's own family; and after various songs from one of them—a very superior

songstress—in the drawing room, we adjourned to a very large unfinished room in the castle, to witness the extraordinary performance of a blind man upon the harp. One of the young ladies sang for him two airs to her guitar, and shall I ever forget the expression of delight his countenance beamed with, as the melody of her voice reached his ear? It wanted not the index to the soul—of which he appeared to have been long since deprived—to show where it touched him; and when I saw the involuntary contortions of his frame, I could have exclaimed with Milton:—

———————— "What of sweet
Hath touched *my* sense, flat seems to this."

Thus is "the wind tempered to the shorn lamb." And thankful should we be that it is so.

It has many times been observed of fox-hunting, and in its praise, that it is somewhat of a Saturnalian amusement, bringing, to a certain extent, all men upon a level. But it does more than this. It renders a man superior to many of those little trials and personal inconveniences which would not otherwise be submitted to by those who had the power of avoiding them. In short, if I may be allowed the expression, *it makes a man a man*. I myself had walked to Dunse-castle this night, a dark and wet one in November, in a rough great coat and strong shoes, with my pumps in my pocket, because the expense of a post-chaise did not square with my purse, but such could not be said of the young noblemen at the cottage, who had still further to travel than I had. When the party broke up, however, I saw the rough great coats, and the strong shoes, and the pumps in the pocket were the order of the day, or rather of the night, with them—with this difference, that *their*

lordship's pumps went into a footman's pocket, and *Nimrod's* into his own.

On the morning of this day (Tuesday) I was thus addressed by Lord Elcho, "To-morrow," said his Lordship, "we are going into a good country, and *we shall have a run;* but it is a strongly fenced one, and requires a hunter to get across it. I will send one to cover for you that will carry you comfortably and well"—the whole of which prediction was fulfilled to the very letter. The morrow came and appeared like hunting. Some rain had fallen on the preceding evening, the wind was in the west, and on looking out of my window, I perceived that things looked well above—old Boreas asleep, and Phœbus where he should always be on a hunting morning, not a beam of him to be seen.

As is generally the case, I was the first of the Dunse party to make my appearance in the breakfast room; for having been all my life an early riser at home, I cannot lie late in the morning when abroad; but when I opened the door, I found there had been an arrival in the person of one whom I could not recollect ever to have before seen. His figure was tall and thin, with a piercing but very intellectual eye; and, independently of his being "stained with the variation of each soil," which showed that he had been at work whilst I was asleep, and must have ridden a long distance that morning, there was a freshness of complexion, and a wiryness of frame about him which at once convinced me he was a sportsman. "Surely," said I to myself, "this is Sir David Baird, of whom I have heard so much, but whom I have never seen." Such it proved to be; and as, where there is a sympathy of thought and sentiment, noble souls make acquaintance at first sight, so do sportsmen, and we soon became known to each other. He had

ridden from Edinburgh that morning, *only* forty-two miles, on the same hack; and having eight miles further to go to the place where the hounds met, would just complete the half hundred. But what cares a man in the prime of life, as Sir David is, for distance from cover, in the morning, if he has but even a prospect of a good run.

By the way, I have a little anecdote that will not come amiss here on the subject of riding long distances on the road, for which we know some persons have been remarkable, almost indeed beyond belief. Amongst those, few have exceeded the performances of the Duke of Dorset, at one time his present Majesty's Master of the Horse, and also filling the same—to his Grace, no doubt, congenial—office to his late Majesty George the Fourth. Dining one day at the Pavilion at Brighton, when the late Duke of York was also a guest, the following short, but pithy, sentences were exchanged between them. "A *strong* ride that, which we took this morning, Dorset," said his royal highness, (about twelve miles!) "It was, sir," replied his Grace; "but I had ridden from London before I had the honour of attending your royal highness in your ride."

But now once more to business. The fixture for this day was Lady Kirk, eight miles from Dunse, a place of such notoriety in the history of Scotland, that even in a Sporting Tour it cannot be entirely passed over. Although its being close in the neighbourhood of the ford, or passage of the Tweed, by which the Scotch and English armies generally invaded each other's country, gives it much notoriety, the cause of its being called Lady Kirk is of higher interest at the present moment inasmuch as it shows how times are altered since Jocky of Scotland, prayed for bannocks ready baked, and, I believe, ready buttered as well.

It seems that the name of this parish was once Upsettlington, or Upsettingtown, I forget which, but was changed to Lady Kirk, or the Lady's Church, from the following incident. As James the Fourth of Scotland was passing this ford, he was in great danger of being carried away by the stream, when, like Jack (the sailor) in the storm, he made a holy promise of what he would do, if he could but get out of the scrape. Jack, we know, did nothing; but the king kept his word, and built this church, which he dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and thus it bears its name. It is also singular that it is one of the few Gothic sacred buildings that survived the desolating fury of the reformation. But Lady Kirk is also deserving of notice by me, from the recollection that the late owner of the Mansion House, Mr. Robertson, was the most spirited breeder of sheep Scotland ever saw, having given the celebrated Mr. Stone seven hundred guineas for two ram sheep. It is also the scene of the poem of the Goblin Groom, descriptive of a run with the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds, and other doings, bordering on the supernatural, to which I may presently allude. The following lines, however, contrasting the meeting of the fox-hounds with deeds of ancient days, may be not inaptly introduced here; and especially so as it is the truly classic ground on which the poem of Marmion opens:—

"This bank, in former days, has been,
Sad witness of a different scene:
When Norham's border castle rang
With England's war-foreboding clang,
When threaten'd feud was heard to sound
Defiance to the Scottish ground;
When cannon roared from Norham's wall,
The English border clans to call."

Although I have said that Lady Kirk was the fixture for the day, I must stop short in my course before I arrive there. Rather a large

assemblage of sportsmen accompanied the hounds from Dunse, and Lady Kirk, in itself, being a very uncertain place of showing sport, it was proposed to Lord Elcho that a small spiny, as it is called in Leicestershire, by the side of the road, and five miles short of the place appointed, should be drawn, en passant. His lordship for this once consented, and mark the result. A Lady Kirk fox jumped up before the hounds, in the twinkling of an eye, putting his head as straight for home as the most hungry pigeon could fly; and a most severe burst, over a most severe country, was the consequence. Now who saw the finish? I can only say I myself did not; nor indeed could I learn who did. I was well with them for the first ten minutes, when we came to some rails and a brook, which stopped the whole field. "Dont go there;" cried Lord Elcho to me, "you'll be smothered; (it was a bog) here's a pass to the left." So by some going to the left, and some to the right—where there was also a pass—*whilst the hounds went straight*, no small advantage was gained by them, not only over the horses but also over their fox, and the pace appeared to bid defiance to catching them. At all events, my chance was soon out. About a mile further on, we came to a fence of this description, but which I found to be by no means an unusual one in Scotland: there was a ditch on the rising side, as also on the landing side, which was a good stoned road. But to enable a horse to leap the second ditch, he had to land himself upon a stone wall, from whence he was to receive the fulcrum. "Now for a fractured skull or a broken thigh, five hundred miles from home," said I to myself, as I perceived the horse that went before me put his hinder foot on a sort of stepping stone from whence his fulcrum was derived; "by heavens I'll look for a better place." In short, I funked it. Keepsake * was very indignant at my not letting him go;

* The name of the horse.

but, as Jack said at the Opera, "Remember I'm just come from France," said I to him, as I put him at another place, which presented a broader footing.

Of course I saw no more of the hounds till I found them in the park at Lady Kirk, where, by one of those untoward events from which the chase of wild animals never can be free, "the finish" to this beautiful burst of five miles in twenty-two minutes was wanting. The hunted fox was seen, dead beat, before the pack, when a fresh one jumped up in view; and before the hounds could be stopped another fox was on foot. Mr. M'Kenzie Grieve did not see this fine burst, as he went to the place of meeting, in the morning.

From Lady Kirk, we trotted away—some miles—to a fine gorse cover called Broomdykes, reckoned the "Cream Lodge gorse" of Berwickshire. It held a brace of foxes, one of which went away on the second attempt, and, after a fine ring round the country, through Blackadder, Kellow Craigs, and Manderstone, saved his life by getting into a "conduit"—as a drain in Scotland is called—under the park wall of Wedderburn-house, about three miles from Dunse, at the end of fifty-eight minutes.

Although the country we passed through is the deepest and the most strongly fenced of any in Berwickshire, I had an opportunity of seeing the hounds do their work through nearly the entire of this fine run, and I have great pleasure in repeating the opinion of all present, that nothing could have exceeded their steadiness or their *stoutness*,—which, after the tickler they had in the morning and the distance they had travelled, was highly creditable to their condition. It is true they only occasionally went the ultra pace, the scent, at times, being flashy; and they were

twice in difficulties; but they got uncommonly well out of them, and this is the test of merit, for all hounds will hold on with a breast-high scent.

For the information of such of my brother sportsmen who may never have ridden over, as well as of such as may contemplate riding over, Berwickshire, I will describe the sort of fences we had this day to encounter. I do not recollect any thing in the shape of timber. We had neither gate, stile, rail, or brook, but we had every description of hedge and ditch and bank and wall that the ingenuity of man could contrive. Moreover we had, now and then, hedge and ditch and bank; then hedge wall and ditch, *all in the same fence.* Almost every fence indeed was a double one, the ditches regular yawners; and from the circumstance of more than half of them being to be taken out of deep, or ploughed ground, they took the shine out of the horses. Many of them also were very difficult to get at, with comfort or safety to the horse. For example,—on the headlands of such fields as are ploughed, a small ridge, or baulk, as it is called, is left between the last 'bout of the plough and the ditch, to prevent the soil washing into it. In some cases these were of sufficient width to tempt a horse to take his footing from off them, but it is an uncertain and slippery one. If, however, he do not foot on it, he has so much the greater exertion to make to enable him to land himself on the bank, having cleared a ditch that would swallow a mail coach. And how fares he when thus landed? Why he has to leap another ditch that would swallow another coach, and to alight in ground half up to his knees; if in a turnip field, half up to his shoulder. But it was—from the cause I have stated, *the difficulty of the footing*—the first ditch that funked me; for the second I cared nothing, often throwing my eye upon the hounds when on the bank, and letting my horse look out for himself; and I am ready to admit that my imagination

more than once presented me with a picture of Keepsake on his back and Nimrod under him, in a ready made grave. But he did not make a single mistake in the course of the day, nor were there so many falls as might have been expected in so severe a country, in which horses not used to it, would make a bad figure at first.

We had a kind of a practical apologue at the conclusion of this run, which will confirm the character I have given of Mr. Grieve's powers in his saddle. A horse on sale was brought out for Lord Saltoun's inspection, and, on the suggestion of Mr. Mc Dowal Grant, Mr. Grieve was requested to give him a "lark," to ascertain his proficiency in fencing. After taking him a ring around the neighbouring country, he all at once appeared in our sight, in the act of charging a flight of rails on the other side of which was a drop—for I measured it—of upwards of ten feet, into a hard turnpike road! There was no time to check him; and when I saw himself and the horse in the air I expected both would be smashed on the spot. Strange to say, although the horse's forelegs gave way from the concussion, and he made a sort of a groove—as if with a hoe—across the road with his knees, which was absolutely lined with hair, Mr. Grieve sat as firmly in his saddle as if the animal had been standing still under him at the time; and, equally strange—the consequence no doubt of no angular stone coming in contact with them—the knees of the horse were not incurably broken. Sir David Baird, who rode in his usual masterly style (and, as a friend of mine, who knows him well, says, "who can beat *him?*"), nearly put out one of his horse's eyes in a bullfinch fence in this run; but although the eyelid was deeply cut, and the bleeding profuse, the eye was found to be uninjured.

The day concluded with a dinner at Lord Eglinton's, to which I had

the honour of an invitation; and as the evening was fine I thought a walk of two miles and a half would do me good; so with my pumps in my pocket, I "wound my way" through Dunse-park, having been assured of a cast home in a carriage at night. Now I sometimes stop to contemplate nature; and I saw her here very much to my admiration—not in a gay, but in a sombre mood, in what Shakespeare calls "the silent of the night"—as I stood about ten minutes by the side of the beautiful piece of water in this park. Although the young moon was obscured at the moment, there was just enough of light to see across it; and as

——————— "the western breeze
Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees,"

the reflection of the fine timber on the opposite side had a very pleasing effect. But nature is never quite silent, even in the night season; and although the night-warbling bird was now absent, a quack from a wild duck in one place, and the alighting of a widgeon in another, showed that the business of the day was not quite at an end with them. With myself it certainly was not; for in less than half an hour from that time, I sat down to a most excellent dinner at the cottage, and after the fatigue of the run and the heat occasioned by it, the iced Champaigne of Mr. Wauchope was more than usually extolled by all. Hunger, they say, is the best sauce; there was no need of that to heighten the goût here; but a good run in November creates a thirst which it is delightful to slake at such a cool fountain as this. That on Parnassus is a ditch to it.

By the bye, the mention of good dinner reminds me of the fact, that our noble host received a letter this evening, from Eglinton, which very considerably damped his own enjoyment of it. It was to inform him of the death, by his own hands, of his French cook, who had coolly walked

into a river to drown himself. "Independently of the loss of an excellent servant," said his lordship, "I shall be in an awkward dilemma, when my friends come to see me at Christmas; and I expect a large party." His lordship, however, was here instantly relieved by the offer of Sir David Baird to lend him his cook, also a professor from the same school. Lord Eglinton could assign no earthly reason for this rash act, but hazarded an opinion that it might not have happened had he brought him with him to Dunse; and there may be some truth in this; idleness is the parent of many crimes, and to a mind under the influence of hypochondriacal passions, is one of the strongest incentives to that of suicide.

About the hour of midnight—for fox-hunters seldom enter upon the "morning revel"—I was on my road to my bed, not in the rough great coat, with the "pumps in the pocket," but comfortably stowed in the right hand corner of a yellow post-chaise, in which were also seated Sir David Baird and Mr. Campbell. Now we have often heard of "an agreeable companion in a post-chaise" being advertised for in the newspapers, therefore I caution the public against accepting of Mr. Campbell of Saddell, should he ever make a tender of himself to that purpose—that is to say, unless, like poor Monsieur of the *cuisine*, the advertising party is weary of life and wishes to avoid the discredit of *felo de se*.

Our sawney of a post boy was not content with finding a gate in the park wide open, but in compliment, as I suppose, to the Laird of the Castle, he must dismount to shut it. No sooner had he got in the rear of the carriage, than Mr. Campbell started the horses off by way of "a lark;" and had not the fellow with great adroitness caught hold of one of them, just as they were getting into a gallop—for they were a very spicy pair—the result of the "lark" would have been one or the other

of the following catastrophies:—We should either have been capsized over a heap of earth, thrown up out of a drain in the road, a few yards further; or comfortably *landed*, as Paddy says, amongst the wild ducks in the lake, in about two fathom of fresh water. Nor was this all. In each of these predicaments, had such been our fate, I should have been undermost of the three, and ere it had come to my turn to have crept out of the drag, I think I should have stood a fair chance of ending my Tour in Dunse-park. As it happened, we arrived at Dunse without any mishap, and though before I retired to my couch I put up a prayer for my safe deliverance, I have reason to believe that I fell asleep muttering to myself these words:—"You are a devilish pleasant fellow, Mr. Campbell, any where but in a post-chaise."

Despairing of seeing hounds over Berwickshire on the powerless animals sent for me from Edinburgh, and unwilling to trespass further on Lord Elcho's stable, I determined on missing Thursday's hunting with his lordship, and trotting over to Cornhill for the purpose of seeing the Galewood pack on that day,—the 13th of November—at Pawston, having previously written to King to send me another horse in the room of the one I had had a taste of, and found perfectly unfit to carry me with hounds. Cornhill is a large roadside post house, about a mile south of the fine bridge over the Tweed at Coldstream, on the great North road, and about fifteen miles from Dunse;—a better, or more reasonable inn, no sportsman could desire, with excellent stables for hunters. It was here that I first saw that curiously constructed carriage called the curricle mail, which, taking the bags from the down mail at Morpeth, and travelling by a shorter cut, arrives at Edinburgh sufficiently early to enable letters to be answered by the up mail, which it takes by

the same route to Morpeth. It is said to travel at the rate of fourteen miles in the hour!

It would require the aid of the pencil to show how the horses are put into this curricle mail, which merely consists of a close body, like that of a dog cart, with a seat before for the driver, and a chair behind for the guard exactly on the principle of that to the regular mail coach. But the singular part of the affair consists in the bar passing under the bellies of the horses, instead of over their backs, which makes it very awkward to put them to, and take them from, the carriage; and will account for the landlord having told me, that a pair of blood mares of his own breeding were not made steady at these times, under three months. It is doubtless a carriage for speed, being near to the ground, and so hung as to throw very little weight on the horse's backs; but I was told it now and then gets floored, as indeed what *very fast* drag does not? The last time I was in Edinburgh, I saw one of these carriages in the streets, in a cart, fractured in all parts; as they say on the road indeed, after a very bad mishap, "the drag might have been brought home in a sack." It has now been going ten or twelve years, and is a great convenience to Edinburgh.

When on my Yorkshire Tour I was frequently at a loss, when inquiring my road, &c., from the want of a glossary of words, particularly in the county of Durham; so took the first opportunity of ascertaining how I should fare in Scotland in the use of my English tongue and ears, and this presented itself to me this morning on the road from Dunse to Cornhill. I overtook a farmer's boy on a good looking old horse, when the following dialogue took place.

Nimrod. You have a good old horse there, boy.

Boy. Aye—have I.

Nimrod. Is he a hunter?

Boy. Aye—is he; he's a muccle of spirit, but he's sair wraught and all fad.

Nimrod. Will you follow me over that hedge?

Boy. A ah—and what will I get by that? What if I breaks his lag?

Nimrod. A good licking, I suppose.

Boy. Nay—and that wouldn't be a'.

If this be a specimen, said I to myself, there will be no difficulty on this score; but I suspect an English lad would have risked the consequence of the "lark."

When I arose in the morning I found the frost unusually severe for the season, and the guard of the curricle mail reported it's being still severer south. One night's frost in November, however, seldom stopping hunting, I rode to the place of meeting, making allowance for the morning, and just nicked the time. I have already made mention of this pack, as formerly managed by Mr. Boag, but now by Major St. Paul,—brother to Sir Horace—and with whom I became acquainted during one of my visits to Raby-castle. He has been all his life a dear

lover of the sport, but is a young master of hounds, this being his second season.

"How do you like my hounds?" said the Major to me, after the usual salutation. "I'll tell you presently," was my reply; the fact was, their backs were up and their sterns were down from the severity of the morning, and they did not look to advantage; "but this I can tell you at once—*your condition appears admirable.*" The gallant master and huntsman—for he hunts them himself—appeared much pleased by this remark, for he told me it was a point upon which he prided himself; and as I shall presently have an opportunity of showing, I was myself gratified at having made it, because it proved to be a good hit. There was only a small field, but amongst them Lord Frederick Fitzclarence, who resides in the neighbourhood of the kennel, at a seat of his brother-in-law, Lord Kelburne, and is a very regular attendant of the Galewood pack.

The Greeks had their oracles, the Romans their augurs, all the world their omens, and I now and then have mine. "We shall have sport to-day," said I to myself, as I put a crooked sixpence into my pocket,—a thing I had not seen for many a long day—after I had mounted my horse, and especially as he gave a loud neigh at the moment, which Tacitus, when speaking of the ancient Germans, says, "was considered so portentous as to be watched by kings and priests."

The omens, however, were this day unpropitious, and even our start was a bad one. We were holloaed to the top of a hill where we were told the "tod"—as a fox in Scotland is called by the people—was just seen; but I was soon convinced there had been no "tod" there, and told

Major St. Paul as much. The excitement, however, a lark of this sort produces in hounds, exhibits them in a very different character to that of trotting along a road on a frosty morning; and I could then have answered the question previously put to me by the owner, but which I reserved to another opportunity. Some short time after this disappointment occurred we found a brace of foxes, and, what does not often happen, the pack, consisting of only sixteen couples, divided into two equal lots, eight couples settling to one fox and eight to another. I of course started after the one that broke in the line on which I was riding at the time, but as soon as I perceived we had only part of the pack with us, and that our huntsman was on a fox with the other part, I joined the whipper-in in trying to stop them. But had the one been riding Eclipse, and the other Flying Childers, we should not have succeeded in doing so, for they went *straight up the Cheviot hills*, and were never seen again till the next morning, when they returned to their breakfast at the kennel. The other fox ran short and was lost, and thus ended my first day with the Galewood pack.

"It is good," said a learned Scotchman, "to admire great hills, but to live in plains;" and although I believe the celebrated writer I am quoting alluded to the perilous distinctions of political faction, his words would have equally applied to fox-hunting. As well might we expect the stream to rise against its fountain as to expect a horse to carry a man up the Cheviot hills with hounds on a scent, neither is it reasonable to call upon him to do so; and were I to steal a flourish to adorn my pen, I should compare the attempt to that of Hannibal to pass the Alps. Nevertheless, although my horse showed a decided dislike to it, for he as much as said "I will have no more of it," I was pleased

to tread such classic ground as "Flodden's ill-fated field," which lies at the foot of the Cheviot hills.

On my return to Dunse the same night, I found Lord Elcho had had a fine day's sport. He killed his fox in the morning; had a hunting run from Eddington-hill to the Lea rocks with his second fox, at noon; and, finding another at a quarter before four o'clock in the evening, ran him for an hour at the very best pace, and whipped off, at dark, on Eddington-hill.

Friday 14.—A dies non in the hunting way. Amused myself by looking over the studs in Dunse, amongst which was that of Sir David Kinloch*, who arrived the same evening. Sir David—the wrong side of fourteen stone in his saddle—is a very hard rider, and, although debarred the enlivening influence of the grape, owing to having fractured his skull by a fall, is a very cheerful companion at any hour of the day or night. I was much pleased to make the acquaintance of this gentleman, and for the following reasons:—He is not only passionately fond of hunting, and also a great agriculturalist, but there formerly existed a great intimacy between my family and an aunt of the Baronet's, the lady of the late Sir Foster Cunliffe, Bart., of Acton-park, near Wrexham, who was the first specimen of a Scottish lady that came under my observation for nearly the first twenty years of my life. She is also now in her grave, and therefore beyond the reach of either censure or praise, —from censure, I believe, few were more free—but all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance will join me in saying of her, that she was

* Sir David resides at Gilmerton, near Haddington, about twenty-five miles from Edinburgh.

one of the finest specimens—both in person and in mind—of a Scottish lady that Scotland ever produced. Moreover, her name and character are worthy of being recorded in a sporting magazine as the original patroness of the celebrated archery meetings for which the aristocratic neighbourhoods of Wrexham, Chester, Ellesmere, and Oswestry have been for at least forty years so signal.

The late Lady Cunliffe was the mother of ten children, and, had her life been spared only a fortnight longer, would have seen the anniversary of her fiftieth wedding day!! The anticipation of this event, however, gave rise to an incident, which, if it had been followed up to its conclusion, would have given birth to a scene of more than ordinary interest, and to which it would perhaps be difficult to find a parallel in domestic life. A friend of the family accidentally put into her ladyship's hand the following lines, not only beautifully written by one from her own country, and therefore more likely to find the road straight to her heart, but so closely in association with her own situation at the moment, that she at once declared that, if she lived to see it, her husband should read them to her in the presence of all her children on the approaching anniversary, which she emphatically called her "*golden day*."

Thou kens, Mary Hay, that I loo' thee weel,
My ain auld wifie sae kindly an' leal* ;
Then what gars† thee stand wi' a tear in thine e'e
And aye look sae wae‡ when thou lookest on me.

Dost thou miss, Mary Hay, the young bloom on my cheek,
With the hair hinging round, sae jetty and sleak ;

* Loyal. † Makes. ‡ Sad.

For the snaw's on my head and the roses are gane
Since *that* day o' days I first ca'd thee mine ain.

Or grieves thou the loss of mine eye's youthful fire,
And the wild song I sung, which thou used to admire;
For I'm darksome an' cauld now the winter is come,
And the soft sound of music within me is dumb.

But tho' that the fire of mine e'e be dim
And age, wi' its frost, stiffens every limb,
Thou kens that my heart has no frost for thee,
For summer returns at the blink of thine e'e.

The miser haulds hard, and still harder, his gold;
The ivy grasps firmer the tree when it's old;
And thou art the dearer to me, Mary Hay,
As a' else turns seary and life wears away.

We maun part, Mary Hay, when our journey's done,
But I'll meet thee again in the world that's aboon;
Then what gars thee stand wi' a tear in thine e'e,
And aye look sae wae when thou lookest on me.

By whom these lines were written, I am unable to say. They *may be* by Robert Burns, for I have no copy of Burns by me; but this I can say of them—they are, in my humble opinion, sweetly and tenderly poetical, and worthy the pen of any man.

I offer no apology for this digression—a passing tribute to the memory

of a lady who was so distinguished an ornament to the society in which I myself first moved:

> Be it a weakness—it deserves some praise,
> We love the play-place of our early days.

But to return to Dunse and the studs there. Amongst others, as may be supposed, the stables of Mr. Cosser, the Dunse horse-dealer, were not omitted in this morning's lounge. I have seen it in print, that "an honest horse-dealer is a character written in the dust," but I have met with honest horse-dealers before I saw Mr. Cosser of Dunse, whose character stands high as a man of integrity in his business; as a spirited agriculturalist; as a capital rider to hounds, although nearly big enough to be cut into two; and as a sportsman. His son met with a bad accident the season before last in the field. The horse of a brother sportsman lashed out his heels and dreadfully fractured his leg, but the fortitude he exhibited called forth the admiration of all who were so unfortunate as to witness it.

Saturday, 15.—Lord Elcho met at Marchmont-house, the seat of Sir Hume Campbell, Bart., M. P. for Berwickshire, a fine old place, and approached by an avenue upwards of a mile in length. We soon found our fox, and killed him after twenty-five minutes — the pace good throughout. Found again at Chouseley, and had a ringing run of an hour, when the "tod" was killed by a shepherd's dog. Sir Hume was in Ireland at this time, but his Lady's brother, Captain Spottiswoode (I believe), lately arrived from that country, and a very good man across a country, was out, and Sir Hume arrived very shortly afterwards.

The first whipper-in, Bob, had a narrow escape this day as the hounds

were worrying their first fox. One of the field incautiously approaching too near to them, his horse kicked him most violently, and had he struck him an inch higher up, would have killed him on the spot. As it was, the blood appeared through his clothes. Sportsmen cannot be too cautious at this particular moment; for horses, perfectly quiet at all other times, will kick both horses and hounds as well as men when they smell blood, and their sense of smell is very susceptible to it.

Sunday, 16.—Hudibras says, when speaking of the English language, that we have "a suit for holidays, and another for working days." Being now in a country where the Sabbath is spent somewhat differently to what it is in France, I must "hold hard" here and sink hunting. After church then, I walked to Dunse-castle for two purposes; first—to pay my respects to the worthy inmates of it; and secondly, to have a look at the outside of the house, having only before had ocular demonstration of the inside, which, after all, to one so little versed in architectural science as myself, is generally the best in the month of November, and particularly about the hour the dinner bell rings. And this reminds me of a good anecdote respecting Marchmont-house, of which I have just spoken. It was built by the last Earl of Marchmont, who was told that the roughness of its exterior—being of what is called ruple-work—was not suitable to the splendour of its interior. "Perhaps not," said the Peer, who was a wag; "but I mean to live in the *inside* and not on the *outside* of my house." But to return to Dunse-castle. It is undoubtedly one of the finest castellated mansions I have ever seen in any country, and the ornaments and figures on the specula, or watch towers, are to my taste singularly elegant and imposing. Conscious, however, of my being a bad hand at describing houses, as well as a very bad judge of the outside of them, your readers shall form their own

opinion of Dunse-castle from the following description of it in the "Picture of Scotland" (Vol. I. page 42), published in 1834, and illustrated by several plates—a very amusing work:

"Dunse-castle is a magnificent new house, in what is called the castellated style. It was erected partly upon the remains of a former castle, which had been the property of that glorious patriot, Randolph Earl of Moray, and it went into the hands of Cospatrick (Earl of Dunbar), by his equally glorious daughter, Black Agnes, who married that powerful nobleman. The former castle was remarkable on account of having been the head quarters of General Leslie, when he lay with the Scottish army of 1639 on the top of the neighbouring Law. The apartment in which he and his officers dined, having fortunately been preserved untouched at the re-edification, can now be seen in the castle; it is the butler's room.

"The interior decorations of Dunse-castle are truly splendid; some of them, indeed, curiously beautiful. The gothic style prevails in both the architecture and the furniture of the house, the stair-case is exceedingly fine, and one of the galleries is lighted by a window of the loveliest stained glass to be seen in Scotland. The best rooms are full of pictures, many of which are very good. The portraits are worthy of especial attention; for besides those of his own family, Mr. Hay has collected many others, and possesses, in particular, the best of the Seton gallery. One of the latter, the first Viscount Kingston, drawn as he appeared on alighting from the flight of Worcester, is worthy of more than ordinary notice; the dusty sweat of battle and flight glistering with all the force of reality on the brow of the fatigued soldier, who seems just to have laid aside his head-piece."

But the situation of this castle is quite in keeping with its architectural decorations and character. It stands in a valley, at the head of a beautiful lake nearly a mile in length, absolutely embosomed in finely-wooded hills—in fact, amidst all the ornaments of nature: and this I think is saying enough of it. The land about it—a great recommendation, in my eye—is also excellent, quite equal to feeding good sized beasts, I should imagine; but Mr. Hay is not a great farmer, although he has one of the best arranged home steads I ever met with in any country, and equal to a great extent of business.

It being one of those fine days in November which in my opinion equal those of any other month in the year, and which, although they may cast somewhat of a sombre tint over nature, impart by no means a disadvantageous one to woodland scenery, I very much enjoyed a walk through this fine domain with Mr. Hay, who accompanied me to pay my respects to Captain Maxwell, residing in a nice hunting box at the extremity of it, also the property of Mr. Hay. "We shall find him in the stable," said Mr. Hay (it being stable hour), "for he is a great man for condition;" and there, in truth, did we find him, and in some alarm as to the fate of the eye of one of his hunters which had received a slap from a thorn. I assured him there was nothing to fear, and that a light dose of physic and warm water fomentations would soon perform a cure; which they did. He had in his stable a five-year-old gelding bred by his father, quite thorough-bred, and next to the King of the Valley, and old John Bull, the largest horse of that description I ever remember to have seen. If he make a hunter, he is a trump for a roomy country. We afterwards called at the Cottage, where some of the party from Dunse were assembled on the same errand as ourselves—to pay our respects to Lord Eglinton. Here "Nimrod was sold." I was told to look out of

the window through a telescope, which would make me see every object *double*. "It must be a treat," said I to myself, "to see two beautiful lakes, with their finely timbered banks, adjoining each other;" so putting the instrument to my eye, I gravely looked out for dame Nature's twins. Now, although I could see nothing, I could hear something that soon convinced me I was "sold." It was, in fact, not a telescope, but a silver tube resembling a telescope, for the purpose of conveying brandy to the moors, and, no doubt, if applied to the mouth in lieu of the eye, would soon make one see every thing double.

"But if one power did not both hear and see,
Our sights and sounds would always double be."

Monday 17th. Lord Elcho met this day at Elmford-bank, in a very wild country, and one apparently short of foxes. We had however rather a good thing in the evening of seven or eight miles an end, from Cockburn-law to Dunse-wood, where, landing amongst a host of foxes, nothing more could be done. In the course of the ring our fox skirted Dunse-law, where once upon a time twenty thousand men were in arms for the purpose of murdering twenty thousand other men in arms, unless they said their prayers after the same form that they themselves said them! No doubt they called this "religion," but I call it by a very opposite name.

Tuesday 18th. This was a day big with great events. Imprimis—it was the one that was to usher me for the first time in my life not only into the field with the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds, but, what I thought still more of at the moment, into the presence of their crack huntsman and "king of servants," as Lord Kintore calls him—the noted William Williamson—alias Will, alias the Laird of St. Boswell's; of whom I had

been led to expect all that belongs to knowledge and experience on the art of hunting fox-hounds—the said William Williamson, alias Will, alias the Laird of St. Boswell's, having whipped-in to, and hunted fox-hounds thirty-two seasons, with only one interruption from a fall, in which he broke his arm!! How far these expectations were realized, will appear in due time.

But this was a day memorable on another account. It produced, as allowed to be, one of the finest runs ever seen over Scotland. The place of meeting was Stitchel, the fine seat of Sir John Pringle, Bart., about ten miles from Dunse, where a large field from all sides of the country were assembled, but unfortunately for himself, though fortunately for his horses, the noble owner of the pack was prevented by some important business from making one of them. After a formal introduction to Williamson, by Lord Elcho, and a slight glance at the pack, we proceeded to business, the result of which I shall present to you in two reports—one from the Kelso Mail, and the other from my own observation of it.

"Duke of Buccleuch's fox-hounds. This celebrated pack has now for some time been in the field in this district, and from the sport it has already afforded, there is every prospect of a most successful season. On Tuesday last there was a splendid field of sportsmen, including amongst their number most of the noblemen and gentlemen at present hunting with Lord Elcho's fox-hounds in Berwickshire. The sport on Tuesday has seldom been surpassed. The hounds met at Stitchel, where they found immediately, and after a short run down by Newton Don, and Sydenham, foxey gave his pursuers the slip by taking refuge in a conduit at Sydenham-lodge, and as it was found impossible to induce him to resign his place, it was resolved to proceed forthwith to East

Gordon, where a gallant fox soon broke cover. Reynard at first made for the moors, bending away at a slapping pace by Rumbleton-law, threading the plantations to the eastward, away towards the moor by Hallyburton, with an evident design of making for Dogden-moss, and a determination to try the bottoms of the cavalry, several of whom were by this time amissing. He then took down by the banks of the Blackadder, towards Greenlaw-dean, where he crossed the water, and next challenged his pursuers upon the high ground, while the number of his enemies were gradually diminishing, red-coats and cock-tails alike retiring from the contest. The gallant pack, however, were not to be easily foiled; they forced him again to cross the water, when he made a determined push for Fogo Muir, and when he skirted the cover at that place the sportsmen were becoming "few and far between;" a few remained who were able to stand the pace and the very heavy country. The *remnant* was not yet, however, done with their day's work. The gallant fox was an *out-and-outer;* disdaining to give up the contest without another effort, he still led the field, in good style, down by Angelrow, and Rochester, and after traversing the park of the latter place, and trying in vain to obtain a place of refuge amongst some of the buildings there, he was run into just as he was about to present his card at the front door of Rochester-house, after one of the severest runs that has been witnessed in this part of the country. Few were able to stand the pace and the country, and not more than half a dozen sportsmen, out of a large field, were in at the death."—From the Kelso Mail*.

Now then for my own version of this fine day's sport. As is often the case with aristocratic foxes that must dine upon game and have their

* This excellent paper, published twice a week, and, as I was informed, established nearly half a century, is fond of a bit of sport—a sort of Caledonian York Herald.

habitations surrounded by park walls, the hounds did not get away in a body with our first fox, although the horsemen did; but as it happened, it mattered not, for after ten minutes at a very good pace, with about eight couples of hounds at head, he went to ground in a drain from which it was found impossible to bolt him. Unconscious of what was to happen afterwards, I was much disappointed at this untoward start, as the country we went over was excellent, consisting of large fields, flying fences, and sound ground. I was also, as will appear presently, mounted quite to my satisfaction.

Between the heats, as we say on the race course, I had the honour of being introduced to Sir John Pringle, whom I had previously noticed in the crowd—but without knowing him—as being particularly well turned out both by his valet and his groom; mounted on an exceedingly neat chestnut horse, and although not in pink, looking quite the sportsman, as well as the gentleman. He did me the favour, and a valuable one I considered it, of introducing me to his nephews Mr. George and Mr. Robert Baillie of Mellerstain, of pure fox-hunting blood, but whom I almost fancied I had previously been acquainted with, from the frequent mention of their names and characters, as well as that of their father, in the celebrated letters of *Nim North*.

In about half an hour after we left the drain we found ourselves by the side of a fine whin cover at East Gordon, the property of Mr. Baillie of Mellerstain—a sure find—and in about ten minutes a fox was on foot. I could plainly perceive there was "no time for dallying," as old Johnson says of a man who talks of getting a wife at forty; and that if the "tod" was a good one, we must have a run, for they brushed him through this very strong cover, at quite an awful pace. "*This*

way," said Williamson to me, as he put his horn to his mouth, and gave them one blow, and I found the good-natured hint was to show me the pass through a deep morass, over which the hounds were streaming away at the moment with a breast high scent. Luckily for the field there were two of these passes, and luckily for me I took the one towards which the pack were leaning, which saved me some distressing ground. " We are in for it," said I to Mr. Campbell, of Saddell, as he was gently passing a rotten wooden bridge over the boundary drain of this morass, which tottered under the weight of himself and his horse almost to its fall; " what a temendous pace they are going!" But over what kind of ground were they going? Over fine, sound turf, which scarcely would bury a horse's shoes? No—but over a large, rough moor, very sticky in some places, and very soft in others, and greatly in favour of the hounds over the horses, in their work. " By heavens but there will be a tale to be told to-day," said I to myself, as I leaned towards Frank Collison, who was stealing along upon a thorough bred one, rather sinking the wind at the time, and apparently in a good line. " Surely," said I to him when I got along-side him, " Mr. Campbell can never hold on at that pace, although he is upon Elcho-Castle!" But there were others at that time going with the hounds of whom a similar prediction might have been made. Amongst them was Mr. M'Dougall Grant upon one of Mr. King's horses, going quite the ultra pace. He will go as long as he can go, thought I to myself, but Mr. King's condition will not stand that pace in November. And he did go as long as he could go; and after the third fall, stood still. Now as the country we went over has been accurately stated in the Kelso Mail, by one who must have had a proper knowledge of it, whereas I had none, it would be useless for me to speak of it further than to state, that, at Marchmont, which was about the *fourth* point our fox made, and up to which

place the pace had been *desperately* severe, there was a slight check, and *the first*. The consequence of this was as I had predicted; the field became very select; but having been admirably piloted by Frank Collison, I was just in time here to see the hounds cross a road in the park under the nose of the horse of the duke's head groom, who had been going the same line with myself *.

But here the scene changed. Previously to the check at Marchmont the country had been in great part open—at least there had not been much fencing, although it had been particularly severe for the horses, and they had been going upwards of half an hour at the very top of their pace! The next point was Fogo Muir, which we skirted, but where the hounds were put together in so masterly a way by Williamson, that barring an open earth, the game was won. Nevertheless, severe as had been the pace, and severe as had been the country, the tale of tales was yet to be told. The deep—the strongly enclosed vale of Merse was below us, and this resolute and finely-winded fox boldly entered it—as much as to say, "none dare follow me." But neither hounds nor men were to be daunted. The pace appeared to mend as the country became more severe—the usual effect of getting upon a better description of soil—and several of the horses that were not told out before began to cut it now. Of falls there were many. Mr. M'Dougall Grant got three; Sir David Baird three, if not four; and Lord Eglinton two, in one of which his lordship was in an awkward situation, being unable to extricate himself from his horse. A most amusing scene however took place directly afterwards between Sir David Baird and himself. They both came together up to a non-

* His grace's head groom, Mathew, is almost always out on one of the duke's horses, and an excellent horseman he is.

jumpable wall. Sir David pulled down the top stones and told Lord Eglinton *it would do*. Lord Eglinton rode at it but it was no go. "I don't think it will do," said his lordship. "*I give you my word of honour*," exclaimed Sir David, (emphatically no doubt,) "it *will* do;" and it did do, for his lordship got over it at the second attempt and Sir David followed him. Soon after this—indeed at the very last fence before the fox was killed, Sir David got to appearance the most awful fall that, I think, my eyes ever beheld, and how he escaped so well as he did was somewhat like a miracle. I was following exactly in his wake, and saw him ride in his usual masterly way at a wall about four feet high, when both himself and his horse disappeared on the landing side. "He is in a coal-pit or a stone-quarry," said I to Lord Archibald Seymour, who was along-side me; for although we were coming down hill upon him at the time, and had the advantage of higher ground, the last thing we saw belonging to him was the tip of his horse's tail. Were I to live a thousand years I should never lose the impression this unwelcome sight made upon me, nor forget the pleasure it gave me to behold this gallant horseman, as well as first rate sportsman, crawling alive up the bank, and pulling at his horse's head. "Are you hurt, Sir David?" said I; "I don't know," replied he, "but I fear my horse is." No sooner was the horse on the bank, however, than Sir David was at work again, and got in at the death. It appeared that the first whipper-in, on seeing him coming down upon this wall, holloaed to him to avoid it, which holloa I heard but was equally unconscious of its meaning, the whipper-in being on the other side of a fence at the time. There was, it appeared, a ravine, or dry water-course, on the landing-side of this wall, a boundary-fence in fact, which no horse, even when quite fresh, could have cleared.

The finish to this fine run was a glorious one. As the last chance for

his life, with the hounds close at his brush, this capital fox got upon the roof of one of the low buildings of Rochester-house; from that to the roof of the house itself, and then fell, exhausted, into the mouth of the hounds, at the end of exactly fifty-five minutes, at the very best pace, and with only one trifling check.

The reporter to the Kelso Mail of this fine run, stated, that "not more than half a dozen sportsmen, out of a large field, were in at the death," but he is a little under the mark here. Lord Archibald Seymour and myself counted sixteen horsemen in all, but some of them had the appearance, from their horses and their *trousers*, of having "joined cry" on the road. Of those known to ourselves were the following:—Sir David Baird, Mr. George Baillie of Mellerstain, Mr. Todd, (his cousin,) Williamson, and the first whipper-in, Frank Collison, and the duke's head groom. Lord Eglinton was with them till about the last half dozen fields, when, having cut his horse's leg at a wall, he pulled up; and that fine horseman, Mr. Robert Baillie, was absent from a similar cause. The absence of Mr. Campbell, of Saddell, may be accounted for in a few words. Sixteen stone over such a country, and at such a pace, was too much even for "Elcho Castle," and I believe Scotland owns not many better nags, or many better men on their backs than his owner is.

I must now account for myself being one of the few out of the many who saw the finish of this fine day's sport; and hereon hangs a tale. Lord Elcho with his usual kindness told me he would get me a mount for the duke's day, and that a horse would meet me at cover. By a mistake about a letter, however, no horse came, and I was making myself as comfortable as such trying circumstances would admit of, when a boy rode up to me, on a horse in splendid condition, as well as looking

all over like what he was, and with the usual touch of the hat, said, "Please, sir, you are to ride *this* horse." "Whose horse is he?" was the natural question. "Lord Elcho's," replied the boy. "Then," resumed I, "it does not please me to ride him; where is his lordship?" "Yonder," answered the boy, "going home." Clapping spurs to my hack, I was in two minutes alongside him. But remonstrance was in vain; all that I could get from him was, that he *insisted* upon my riding his horse, and that if I would not ride him, he would instantly send him home.

My brother sportsmen will enter fully into my feelings on this occasion. In the first place I was depriving a man passionately fond of hunting of the chance of a good day's sport, and as it happened I did deprive him of one just to his liking, and one in which he would, without doubt, have signalized himself. Secondly, I was aware it was the first time of his seeing the duke's hounds in the field for the season —a matter of no small interest to masters of neighbouring packs,—and thirdly, it was possible that I might injure his horse. As, however, the value of the offering is increased by the sacrifice that is made to it, it may be well imagined that I availed myself of every opportunity short of being quite thrown out, of sparing Lord Elcho's horse during every part of this run, and a very favourable one was most fortunately afforded me over the distressing moors of the first twenty minutes, by the judicious piloting of Frank Collison. I was also indebted to a lucky "nick" for getting up at the check in Marchmont-park, where about two minutes breathing-time was allowed my horse. The consequence of all this was, that when we entered the deep vale of Merse, he was going well within himself, and never once put a foot into a wrong place.

There are few periods in the life of a sportsman which afford him such

an overflow of real delight as that which he experiences when in the act of dismounting from his horse, and congratulating his companions, at the finish of such a glorious run as this. Williamson and his men were absolutely in raptures, whilst Lord Archibald Seymour was scarcely himself. Mr. George Baillie's countenance looked more good humoured than ever; I quite forgot that I lived in France; and Sir David Baird must have fancied himself once more at Melton. But if my pen could become a pencil, I would sketch the group of happy faces, for words here are weak. Among other vagaries, I had in my pocket a small flask of *eau de vie*, which went from mouth to mouth, without even the ceremony of a wipe from the coat-sleeve as it passed, but its contents were delicious and refreshing, for we were all more or less exhausted by the pace, and the severity of the country towards the finish. Add to this the day was warm, with scarcely a breath of wind.

There is always some anxiety after such a run as this, on a warm day in November, for the fate of the horses that have been ridden in it. I am happy to say, I heard of none falling victims to that of this day, although I saw two with somewhat of alarming symptoms towards the finish of it. Those that came under my observation, afterwards, were not much the worse. Sir David's horse was only bruised on the point of the shoulder; Lord Eglinton's was not cut in an acting part, and therefore soon got to work again; I passed Elcho-castle on my road home, looking merely somewhat sombre; and I was rejoiced to find that, after his gruel at Greenlaw, Lord Elcho's horse trotted home under me as comfortably as if he had not seen a hound.

I asked Lord Elcho the name and history of this horse. "I call him Inglis," said his lordship, "because I bought him of an Edinburgh dealer of that name, from whom I have had several good horses. I do not

consider him a *very* fast horse, but he is a capital fencer and very stout." I can only add to this good character of my nag, that I would not desire to ride a pleasanter or a *safer* hunter; and when carrying a man on the wrong side of fifty, the latter qualification is no small recommendation to him.

Luckily for mankind there is an evening as well as a morning to a November day, and that although the sun has run his course by five o'clock P. M., man has not run his until another is near at hand. A very agreeable party at the Cottage, the pleasure of which was much heightened by some excellent Irish anecdotes given by Mr. Maxwell in a manner peculiar to himself, and with excellent effect, concluded this—to me—very remarkable day.

The following day—Wednesday, 19—Lord Elcho's fixture was Paxton-house, the seat of Torman Hume Esq., who entertained a large party of sportsmen at dinner on the preceding day, and from whom I had received a polite invitation to breakfast on the Wednesday. Paxton is one of the finest houses in Berwickshire, containing a splendid collection of paintings; it is beautifully situated on the banks of the Tweed, and in the neighbourhood of a handsome suspension bridge, which, together with a beautiful reach in the river, is visible from the windows of the mansion. The road from Berwick to Kelso passes over this bridge, which was designed and executed by Captain Brown, R. N., and is said to be the finest bridge of this description as yet erected in the North, being wide enough for two carriages to travel abreast and with plenty of room for foot passengers.

There was something bordering upon phenomenon in the state of the

atmosphere on this morning, it being nearly as hot as in the dog days. At all events, I never witnessed any thing like it before as regarded its effects on horses—particularly on those in the plough teams, which smoked, when they came to turn upon the headlands, like coach horses at the end of their stage, in a frost. The heat was also much felt by the gentlemen who rode fast to cover; and Lord Eglinton declared he had more taken out of him in riding Paul Pry to Paxton, only about ten miles, than by the fine run of the preceding day. Paul was nearly the best cocktail racer in the North, and won several times, jockied by his lordship. He is, however, one of the most violent horses I ever saw.

Fortunately for ourselves, but more so for our horses, we had not much to do on this extraordinary day. We did not find at Paxton, so trotted away to Broom-dykes in hopes of meeting with the fox which had given us the good hour's sport of which I have before spoken, but he was not at home. We found a short running, dodging gentleman, that required a better scent than the early part of the forenoon afforded to do any thing with, in addition to the hounds being much pressed by the horsemen, and I was pleased that it was so; and for these reasons.—The country we went over was excessively deep and strongly fenced; and the mare I rode, the property of Mr. Maxwell, appeared to me too high in condition for a quick thing, over plough, on a hot day. But I afterwards learned from her owner—who was absent at Edinburgh on this day—that my fears were groundless, and that such was the hardiness of her nature, that, upon the hard-meat system, it was impossible to draw her finer. She was certainly the fattest hunter, in strong work, that I ever remember to have seen, and one of the best fencers.

As the day wore away the temperature of the air became lower, and

we had a splitter in the afternoon that would have satisfied Lord M' Donald for pace. We found our fox in the plantations inside Lady Kirkpark, and he put his head straight for the Hirsel, a cover of the duke's, just five miles distant, which five miles were travelled over in somewhat about three times as many minutes. In fact I am at a loss to name a quicker thing for the last twenty years; so fast, indeed, that with the exception of the first whipper-in, who was outside the park when the fox slipped away, no one man lived with the hounds. Sir David Baird and Mr. M' Kenzie Grieve caught them just as they entered the Hirsel, where, as the duke was to meet there on the morrow, they were of course immediately stopped. The country was sound, with large fields and a good deal of grass, and well adapted to the ultra pace. Sir David Baird rode to Edinburgh after this run—full fifty miles. I may here mention, what I omitted in its proper place, that on the 17th our dinner party, at the White Swan, consisted only of Sir David, Lord Saltoun, and myself. Never having before spent an evening with two Waterloo officers of note, it was natural that I should ask them some questions, and amongst others how each of them had escaped in the fray. Lord Saltoun, it appeared, amongst the hundreds that fell around him, was untouched; but Sir David was less fortunate. He received a bullet in his mouth, which, after carrying away a few teeth, found its way into his throat and lodged there. Fortunately, it was extracted without leaving its marks externally, although the force of a dozen more grains of powder would have been fatal. "But were *you never wounded*?" said I to the Hero of Hugomont. "Knocked down once," replied his lordship, "by a spent ball, but not much hurt. My sergeant, however, thinking I was killed, cried out—"*There goes my lord, he has got it at last.*" "And pray, my lord," resumed I, "what did you say to your sergeant?" "*Not yet*," was the short, but soldier like, reply. And this reply

reminds me of a similar one made by another Waterloo hero whom I also have the honour of knowing, and who is likewise from the same country. I allude to Colonel Hay of the Bays, distinguished amongst his clan and his friends as "Jemmie Hay of the Bays," and a kinder hearted man does not live. I believe bullets or sabres have found their way into almost every part of his body, and on one occasion, as he lay on the ground, he overheard the comfortable tidings that he was dead or dying. "*I'll bet a hundred of that*," said he, faintly, and as it happened, he would have won the wager, for he recovered of his wounds as by a miracle. But some men, like some foxes, take a deal of killing, whereas others are half frightened to death, as I believe all medical men will vouch for. I have, indeed, a near relation who well exemplifies this. "There is no way of getting at the ball," said the surgeon, "but by sawing away two of your ribs, and introducing a child's hand to extract it, for the forceps will not take hold of it; but you may die under the operation." "Saw away," exclaimed he; "I *wont* die, by ——!" Neither did he. I have had the ball in my hand, and read the surgeon's report, which attributed the success of the operation and the cure, not to his skill, but to the determination of this gallant Welchman* that he would not die. His sufferings I will not attempt to describe; but I believe they were almost beyond human endurance—having lain six weeks on his face "to begin with," as Chomley, the Chatham coachman, would say. For my own part, I have always been an admirer of heroes, and am not surprised at Homer's giving them precedence of his gods; yet give me none of your Hannibals, who, because he had been bred in a camp, claimed a dispensation from the polished manners of a capital; but commend me to such as are, in private life, possessed of qualities that render life delightful, and which

* Sir William Wynne—then a subaltern in the Welch Fusileers.

we have a right to look for in all civilized countries in which virtue has its chief foundation in humanity.

The title which Horace gave to his satires and epistles, sufficiently denotes their character. He called them *sermones*,—discourses, conversations, reflections made amongst friends, on the lives and characters of men. Assuredly then I may follow so bright an example, and having mentioned the name of Baird, may be allowed to enter a little into the history of a family of which Scotland may well be proud, and of a name long known in the sporting world as contributing to its honour and its fame.

In the first place, I had heard and read of one distinguished member of this family when I was a boy; of his deeds of glory in our Indian wars; of his numerous wounds; of his captivity and his chains; I need scarcely observe that I allude to the Right Honourable General Baird, second son of the late Sir John Baird, Bart., of Newbyth, near Haddington, uncle to the present Sir David, and from whom he (Sir David) inherited his title and estates. But more to my purpose is the notice of those who have signalized themselves in the hunting field, or on the race course, and I have reason to believe that our good king's dominions never produced a keener sportsman than the late Mr. Baird—the father to Sir David—who hunted East Lothian and Berwickshire for so many years of his life, and was so great a supporter of the Scottish turf. And here I cannot do better than quote the words of one of his friends in a short memoir of his sporting life. "Possessed of an ample fortune," says he, "and with a mind enthusiastically devoted to the sports of the field, Mr. Baird may be truly said to have passed his days in one unceasing round of manly and pleasureable pursuits. His fox-hounds and his race-horses—

shooting in its wildest and most sportsmanlike forms,—his hawks and his game cocks—to all and each of these in their seasons was he most ardently attached." His friend then speaks of his race horses, and in allusion to the St. Leger stakes of 1825, and "the unaccountable position" of his favourite horse Cleveland, in that race—the said Cleveland having been pulled up at the distance-post—expresses an opinion that the disappointment occasioned by the losses his friend sustained, who had deeply backed his horse, "severely wounded his feelings." No doubt they did, but the "unaccountableness" of such things no longer exists at Doncaster.

I must add one other tribute to the memory of this celebrated sportsman. He was the first master of the celebrated Williamson, who may be truly said to swear by him, both as a sportsman and a master, to this day; and be assured, reader, whosoever you may be, there is no better testimony to the good qualities of a gentleman than the good word of his servant. But I was given to understand there was a playfulness of manner in Mr. Baird—"Cockburn Law in the throat," for example—which won the affections of all men; and his enthusiasm in the field could not have been lost upon his huntsman. He was a master of fox-hounds for nearly sixty years, and died at an advanced age, most universally regretted in Scotland.

I feel my blood circulate more freely through my veins when I can honestly extol the virtues as well as the prowess of a sportsman. *Nulli secundus* is the son and representative of this gentleman,—the present Sir David Baird.

Of his character as a country gentleman and a useful member of

society, the piece of plate lately presented to him, and purchased by the subscription of seven thousand freeholders of the county of Haddington, is the best testimonial; as a soldier, his deeds and his wounds are his best panegyric; and it remains for me only to allude to him as a sportsman and a companion. In the first named character, he has long held a high station, not only as a rider *not to be beaten over a country by any man*, but as a superior judge of what hounds are doing; and in every country in which he has followed them, has left behind him the reputation of combining the best properties of the horseman and the sportsman. In proof of this, he was last year solicited to hunt the Pytchly country (Northamptonshire) but preferred a lease of Melton Lodge near Melton, for three years, where he took up his residence during the latter part of last season. This is one of the most complete sporting boxes perhaps in England, which may be accounted for by the fact of its having been, for several years, the residence of the late lamented Earl of Plymouth—that stanch supporter of the Quorn Hunt. If my recollection does not fail me, there are stalls and boxes for nearly thirty horses.

Sir David Baird has been a frequent occasional resident in Leicestershire, and, as well as upon other occasions, his name appears in print, in Mr. Campbell's song—to which I have before alluded—descriptive of a fine run in that county, in which he is represented as sailing along "in his pride of place," (as Shakespeare says of the falcon,) on his famous horse Jemmy Hope. And there is on record an excellent anecdote of this said Jemmy Hope, and this said Sir David Baird. He sold the horse to a gentleman without selling the seat of the rider—a very common case—and the following was the result:—Sir David, having the lead at the time, was floored on his back in a ditch, and, seeing

Jemmy Hope leap over him, with nothing on his back but his saddle, and go straight to the hounds, coolly exclaimed, "There he goes, *he would always be with them if they would let him.*"

As a companion Sir David has been well drilled; for, as has been truly said,

> "To give a young man a good education,
> The army's the very best school in the nation;"

and the circle in which he has since moved always ensures the finish.

Thursday, the 20th. Met the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds at the Hirsel. A very large field—his Grace himself among the crowd, to whom I had the honour of making my bow. We made a bad start, mobbing and killing a fox in a large whin cover. Found again, the hounds getting well away with him, and, crossing the road just under my horse's nose, I got a good start on one of King's horses. Luckily, however, for me we checked at the end of six fields, for it was "bellows to mend" with my nag. But of all the deep countries I ever rode across, none ever came up to this. In fact it was perfectly rotten, and two or three of us were nearly stuck fast in the middle of a loose gravelly turnip field. The ditches, too, were after the order of double-bodied graves, and very inviting to a blown horse. Mr. M'Kenzie Grieve, indeed, contrived to get two falls in these six fields; but when he passed by me at the rate of twenty miles in the hour, in very deep ground, I could not avoid exclaiming to him—"'Tis the pace that kills."

Our fox, it appeared, had turned short back into the cover, where we

soon got upon terms with him again; and, taking fresh ground, was well hunted for about an hour, saving himself by getting into a drain. But he had a very narrow squeak for his life, by an accident which I had never before witnessed to a fox. He got entangled in a sheep-net in the middle of a large field, which it is possible he never saw until he felt it. Those sheep-nets are awkward things in a hunting country. In the course of the Broom-dykes run with Lord Elcho I was all but caught in one myself, it being placed so near to the headland that Keepsake with difficulty collected himself so as to avoid it, after having leaped into the field. It appeared to me to be quite strong enough to have turned him over on his back.

It was the small pack this day, which did their work well, though, for want of a holding scent, the pace was not good throughout. This, however, enabled me to scramble after them about three parts of the way, when, wishing to avoid being smothered, and seeing Mr. Cosser on his best horse take to the turnpike road, I gladly followed his example, and was, with himself, lost—the hounds turning from us every yard they went. But I lost something else this day, which did not present itself to me again during my visit to Scotland. This was, an opportunity of seeing how a Scotch yeoman lived. As Mr. Cosser and myself were endeavouring to fall in with the hounds again, we were joined by a wealthy farmer who lived hard by, and when we had given up the pursuit I was thus addressed by him:—"Mr. Cosser is coming to my house to take some dinner with me; and it will be on the table in half an hour. Will you do me the favour to accompany him?" All I had to do, was to acknowledge, with thanks, the proffered kindness, and to ride on, as I was engaged; but there is no class of persons in whose habits, pursuits,

and welfare, I feel more interest in than in those of the British yeoman —a character truly said to be "known in no other land," *and without whom fox-hunting would be known in no land.*

The Hirsel is the property of the Earl of Home, whom we saw in the cover with his gun, in the use of which I understand he excels. His costume was certainly the costume of the sportsman, and, judging from that, and the sort of dog he had with him, of the working sportsman, and not one of your battue gentry, who have no claim to that honourable distinction, but who only shoot for fame and name. The Hirsel is renowned in history, being the ground on which the Scottish army camped on crossing the Tweed, in the time of the first Charles; the daring, but treacherous Montrose—afterwards Lord Graham—being the first to plunge into the stream, and to set his foot upon the English border.

My engagement this day was to dinner at Dunse-castle, which alone implies the passing of a pleasant evening. Mr. Hay himself was in great force, and we were delighted, ladies and all, by some songs Mr. Campbell sang for us in the drawing room, one of which was—"We have seen a run together"—at my request. "All the sounds that nature utters," says Cooper, the American novelist, "are agreeable, from the gnat's fine treble to the base of the humble-bee," but nothing equals the melody of the human voice. To my ear, at least, the music of "the cornet, the trumpet, the sacbut, the psaltery, and the harp," is but "harmonious discord" to it; and next to first-rate colloquial powers, the being able and willing to sing well is the most pleasing accomplishment in our nature.

Promises have been compared to pie crusts, and vows, I fear, are equally brittle. I had made a vow to myself not to be again found in the same "yellow post-chaise" with Mr. Campbell—at all events, after dinner; yet such was my situation this evening. However, instead of having no coachman, as before, to handle the same spicy pair of nags, we had two, as Sir David Baird jumped into the dickey box, and laid hold of them. "You'll na hit that bay horse, Sir David," cried Sawney, as the word "all right" was sung out, when, as might be expected, Sir David instantly gave him a flanker. Notwithstanding this, and a very dark night, we arrived safe and sound at Dunse; and although "Song on song had deceived the night," not at a very late hour.

Friday, 21st. Lord Elcho's fixture was Dunse-castle, to which place I walked in the morning to breakfast, Mr. Hay having offered me a mount. Lord Elcho's Prince Le Boo, however,—said to have been the best hunter in Scotland, but now rather worse for wear—was waiting for me at the cover, which of course was Dunse-wood, a sort of nursery of foxes. We ran one very hard indeed, with a burning scent, for at least an hour and a half, but all the time in cover; when, unfortunately, owing to a main earth not having been properly stopped, he scratched his way into it and saved himself. No hounds ever deserved a fox better than these hounds deserved this; and the only consolation attending his getting to ground was, in the fact of his being a capital bit of vermin to have stood such a dressing as he got in cover, on rather a close day in November. But pardon me—there was one other consolation. There were several juvenile sportsmen and sportswomen in the cover—some on foot and some on horseback—to whom this hour and half cover hunting afforded many opportunities not only of viewing the *tod*, but of seeing

how the thing was done; and it was likewise a good day for hearing the "gallant chiding" of the pack.

We found a second fox in a cover called "the Doctor's-cover," which soon met his death, owing to the impatience of one of the field to get a start, by which he turned him into the hounds' mouths. I was rather surprised at the gentleman in question doing so, because he has followed hounds a great deal, and has the reputation of being a sportsman; but his conduct reminded me of a description Mr. Meynell gave of a similar start with his hounds from a favourite cover in Leicestershire. "*First*," said he, "came the fox; *next*, Cecil Forester; and *then*, my hounds!" Lord Elcho bore the disappointment like a christian, a term which, on all occasions, we may be allowed to synonymise with gentleman. We found again, and, after a smart scurry over the country, whipped off at dark in Dunse-wood.

This was my last day with Lord Elcho's hounds, and for this reason:—I had not a horse to ride without trespassing on the stables of my friends, and found I had no chance of getting one from King, as the brute he sent me in exchange for another brute which I sent back to him was equal to about nine stone, *on the road*, and a cripple—in fact, with anchylosed joints. What rendered this circumstance more mortifying was, that, on the very day I left Dunse, which was on the morrow of the last of which I have spoken, I missed a run which his lordship had from Press, of an hour and twenty minutes, without what could be called a check. Before I take my final leave of Dunse, however, I shall offer a few remarks upon Berwickshire as a hunting country, as well as upon the hounds that are now hunting it—confined, of course, to my short experience of each.

It is difficult to speak in relation to hunting, of a county so varied on its surface as Berwickshire is, which may be divided into three separate descriptions of *country*, taking that word in the sense accepted by the fox-hunter. But as far as my knowledge of it extends, it bears a strong resemblance to Worcestershire, and particularly so as regards the varieties of it. For example:—The country in the Lammermuir district may be compared to that in the neighbourhood of the Malvern or Bredon hills, very difficult of ascent, but chiefly old turf, in parts clothed with heath, and therefore favourable to scent. Now Cockburn Law, of which I had a bit of a taste the first day I hunted in Berwickshire, is nine hundred feet above the level of the sea, and there are likewise a few more chokers in its neighbourhood. Then again, further on, you have a surface very similar to the Abberley Hills, in Worcestershire, Lord Foley's side of the county, chequered with hill and dale,—what may be called waving unequal ground, but still rideable after hounds, though strongly fenced and sticky. Lastly, the Merse, a low and extremely fertile district, running down to the Tweed and on towards Roxburghshire, deep, and strongly enclosed with a good deal of plough, in conjunction with its high state of cultivation, has a close resemblance to the vale of Evesham, in Worcestershire,—called the garden of England—and (as the Merse is of Berwickshire) the best part of Worcestershire for hounds* but very severe for horses. Both countries, however, at certain seasons of the year are punishers to ride over. But taking Berwickshire upon the whole,

* "The Merse is remarkable," says the author of the Picture of Scotland, "as being the largest piece of level ground in this mountain kingdom. It is twenty miles long, and ten broad. The whole is so fertile, so well enclosed, and so beautiful, that, seen from any of the very slight eminences into which it here and there swells, it looks like a vast garden, or rather perhaps like what the French call *une ferme ornée*."

although I cannot call it the sportsman's Vale of Cashmere, as I called Leicestershire, or even the Montpellier of Scotch hunting countries, it struck me, taking it all in all, as being the best country for hounds I saw in Scotland.

It appears Berwickshire has been hunted beyond the memory of man. In the year 1740, for example by Mr. Lambsdain, of Blanerne, and coming nearer to present times, and jointly with Roxburghshire, by the late Mr. Baird, father to Sir David Baird, and Mr. Baillie, of Mellerstain, of whom I have already spoken, each of whom hunted it for many years—the former gentleman, in fact, till his death, when the Duke of Buccleuch and Mr. Ramsay*, each had part of it in addition to their home countries.

In 1833, Lord Elcho took Berwickshire, and on Mr. Ramsay resigning East Lothian, the duke gave that county also up to his lordship who has his kennel at Amisfield, near Haddington, at which place, as I have already stated, his residence is. The exact boundaries of these countries I am not able to fix; and as I was given to understand there had been some little difference of opinion respecting them, I avail myself of the truism, that "the least said is soonest mended."

The following are the precise periods of Berwickshire being hunted by Lord Elcho, as likewise of East Lothian. The hounds commence the season with cub-hunting in the former county, and then go back to East Lothian. On the first of November they return to Dunse, and hunt Berwickshire to the 20th of December when they go to their home kennel, and hunt East Lothian to the first of February, when they return

* Mr. Ramsay hunted the Dunse country two months in the year.

once more to Dunse. On the 30th of March they quit the Dunse kennel for the home one, and finish the season in East Lothian.

Of Lord Elcho's hounds it would be unnecessary for me to give an opinion, were it not for the wish to have it recorded in your pages, for it is merely the echo of that which passes current from one end of Scotland to the other—namely, that, making only a reasonable allowance for the short time they had been together, they more than answered every sportsman's expectations of them; and this is not saying all that has been said in favour of them. Nevertheless, candour, based on experience, and a wish to avoid the imputation of bestowing praise beyond desert, calls upon me to exclaim—"Surely his lordship must have been highly favoured in his purchase of drafts, as it is well known he commenced with a pinch out of every man's box!" I can with truth assert, that no pack need be steadier than this pack was every day I was out with them, and I more than once asked myself the question:—*For what reason could some individual hounds be drafted?* as they appeared to me to unite all the qualities we require in hounds! "Wait five years," said a brother sportsman to me one day, as I was offering a remark somewhat to this effect. *Verbum sat.*

But as I have before observed, the test of hounds is sport. I am able then to report the proceedings of this young pack last season in the field, which I derived from a source on which I can rely. Previously to my visit to Dunse, they had had what is called "a capital October," killing several old foxes, after good runs. During my visit, they had quite average sport, with one fine run. Up to January the 1st they had killed twenty-four brace of foxes, including one fox which showed as splendid a

run as the annals of hunting can produce,—from point to point, allowed to be twenty miles in two hours, and never fairly off the scent; with blood at the finish. In sixteen days' hunting, they killed twenty-two foxes, and ran three to ground; and some time before the season ended, they had tasted sixty-seven!

The present being the first season of Lord Elcho entering any young hounds of his own breeding, will be one of more than common interest to himself, and of anticipation to his friends. To himself, as the first trial of his own blood, as well as of his success on the election of it; to his friends as a test of his talent in the kennel, as well as judgment in the field. I understood he had been rattling the covers of Dunse, Press, Marchmont, &c. previous to the beginning of the season, when there was a great show of foxes, but cub-hunting doings should never be recorded on paper.

As a huntsman in the field my opinion of Lord Elcho being already recorded, I would not touch on the subject again were it not to enforce one point. All persons who have followed fox-hounds over various parts of Great Britain, have been aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the master of the pack and his huntsman standing well or ill with the yeomen and farmers of their country. In a highly cultivated one, as Berwickshire is, this is a point of the greatest moment as regards the preservation of foxes, and I would hold out Lord Elcho as a pattern here. Not only is he desirous that as little mischief as is possible should be done by his field, but his kind and affable conduct towards all classes of persons ensures him that regard which induces such as may sustain some damage, to make light of it, whilst it fills his country with foxes.

On Saturday the 22nd of November I took my leave of Dunse,—most unwillingly I admit; but it being necessary to change the scene, and progress in my Tour, I found myself about mid-day comfortably seated in a very easy gig, hired for the purpose of conveying me to Kelso, distant about seventeen miles; and from whence the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds were to be reached four times in the course of the following week, and Major St. Paul's once. A ludicrous scene occurred at starting. Unconscious of the splendid manner in which I was to be mounted during my visit to Kelso, I made inquiry from the landlord of the Black Bull at Dunse, as to whether there was such a thing as a hunter to be hired in Kelso, in case I should not be able to take the field at all on the Edinburgh horses, one of which was already lame. "Oh yes," replied the landlord; "there is a Mr. Dickinson, a Yorkshireman I believe, who has the best stables in Kelso, where the gentlemen's hunters all stand; he is a very good man, and will be sure to find you a horse." "Just the person I want," continued I; "*and a Yorkshireman too!* Now have the kindness to sit down and write a note to introduce me to him,—that is, just tell him I am a bit of a sportsman, and that you think I may be trusted with a horse." The request was instantly complied with. Boniface took pen in hand on the spot, and I am sure, reader, you will smile when you peruse his laconic epistle, about as much to the purpose, you will say, as if he had been recommending me to a dancing master. To a master of hounds, at all events, it would have been a more appropriate passport.

"Dear Sir, "Dunse, November 22nd, 1834.

"Mr. A—— has been stopping three weeks at my house. *You will find him a very pleasing gentleman.*

"Yours, truly,

"To Mr. Dickinson, Kelso." —— ——

Now what Mr. Dickinson found me I am unable to say, but I found him one of the civilest creatures ever lapped in a human skin, and my horses were excellently accommodated in his stables at one guinea each per week, but of his hunters—had he possessed any—I stood not in need, as the sequel of this story will show.

I am quite sure I never sat beside a coachman in my life without entering into conversation with him, neither did I see any reason why I should travel in silence with the post-boy who drove me this day to Kelso—an oldish "*boy*," by the way,—for I have found, on my journey through life, that golden opinions are to be gathered from all classes of human beings—old women in particular. This knight of the whip, however, was more than usually communicative,—pointing out to me unasked, many interesting points of the country through which we passed, and amongst others, several that we had traversed in our celebrated fifty-five minutes with the duke's hounds; as also the house of Rowchester, at the door of which that fine run was concluded. "There is Thomson's monument," said he, soon after we entered Roxburghshire, and were only a few miles from Kelso; "I *suppose*, sir, you ken whohe was?" I nodded assent; and if my fellow traveller had known how highly I prize the memory of this modern Theocritus, he might have spared himself the trouble of asking me the question.

I have often considered myself fortunate in meeting with characters on my Tours—that is to say, with persons who step a little out of the path which their fate has allotted to them to pursue; and I soon found out that I had stumbled upon one in the person of Peter, the head waiter at the Cross Keys in Kelso, a house of great repute on the north road. But where is the situation, in the humbler walks of life, in which there is

a wider field for the formation of character and the exercise of it afterwards than that of a waiter at a large inn, upon a much frequented road? And where is the man in this part of Scotland who does not ken the said Peter? For my own part, I could not find any such ignoramus. My own acquaintance with him, however, began as follows:—

There is nothing more striking than the look of reception—if I may be allowed such term—a man experiences at the moment of his approaching the door of a large inn. In fact, from Boniface himself to Bill the boots, a pretty exact estimate is instantly made of his intrinsic value, and the "look of reception" is in exact accordance with said estimate. Now my appearance was of a somewhat dubious nature. No doubt, but at first I might have been taken for what is commonly called a coaching bagman,— by which is implied, a commercial gentleman who travels by coaches instead of by his own "horse and chaise," but who hires a horse and chaise when there is no coach from one town to another, as was the case here on this day. Under such circumstances, then, what more could I expect from Peter, on alighting from the gig, than what I got? which was exactly this: "*Show the gentleman into No. 2, and stir the fire;*" when Peter and his napkin appeared to vanish into air.

But a waiter at an inn of this sort makes a near approach to perpetual motion, at all events to a kind of mortal ubiquity; and something requiring Peter's re-appearance at the door, he saw amongst my traps in the gig, what induced him to believe he was mistaken as to the gentleman in No. 2, and he not only saw a hunting whip and some boot-trees, but he also heard something that settled the point at once. "*The gentleman has been stopping at our house,*" said the post-boy, "*and he is come here to hunt with the duke.*

This short, but pithy, sentence went to the very soul of Peter. In the twinkling of an eye he was in No. 2— stirred the fire, "hoped I left my lord, and all the gentlemen, well at Dunse," "of course I should like a fire in my bed-room?" "what time should I like to dine?" "would order a fire in the large hunt room;" "would my horses be at Kelso to-night?" &c. &c. &c. But now comes the climax. "Give this note to the Dunse post-boy," said I, "and tell him it is for Mr. Campbell of Glen-saddell." "Oh, sir," exclaimed Peter, "I wish I had known you had been writing to Mr. Campbell of Glen-saddell, perhaps, sir, you would have been so good to have told him I am quite all (ill) at all the gentlemen forsaking me; I am sure I sha'nt live two years. I got more in one six weeks, sir, when my lord (Elcho) and the gentlemen was here, than I do all the year round besides. Do, sir, just look at our Hunt room; there, sir, you see that table (we adjourned to the room in which stood a handsome and wide dinner table). The very last time the gentlemen dined in this room, Lord John Scott jumpt clean over that table at four o'clock in the morning, with all the bottles and glasses, punch bowls and jugs on it, and never touched one of them." "Lucky for his lordship," said I, "that he cleared his fence so well; I all but lost my right arm by falling upon a glass bottle; but don't put my dinner in this big room, for it feels devilish cold." Exit Peter, with a bow.

About six o'clock I went to my chamber to dress, and found every comfort in it to be expected at an inn. A tap at the door, however, soon announced the arrival of Peter, who, advancing towards me in the most respectful manner, and with a card in his hand, thus addressed me. "Beg pardon, sir (giving me the card); *an invitation to dinner*, Mr. Barn Callander of Preston-hall, near Edinburgh; *a very excellent gentleman*. He and his lady have apartments in the house—a fine stud of

hunters at Dickinson's stables—hunts every day with the duke. Dinner ordered exactly at seven; hopes to have the pleasure of your company." Now this was very pleasing intelligence to myself, and nothing out of Peter's way, as, but for it, I was booked for the Cock and Gridiron in the village of St. Boswell's—close to the kennel,—the very next morning, intending only to have one day's experience of Peter and his inn, both of which are excellent in their way*. To the hospitality of Mr. Callander then, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making some years back when at Brighton, was I indebted for most agreeable evenings during my residence at Kelso, as he would not hear of my dining by myself, so long as he was sojourning in the house; and, as insisted upon by Peter, dinner was each day served in the hunt room. It is a handsome room, comfortably furnished, having its walls adorned with some good pictures, and displaying other ornaments tastefully blended with the various insignia of the chase.

Even supposing the character of my Tour to have been strictly sporting, I could not omit a short description of the town of Kelso and its immediate neighbourhood, each of which is full of interest to those who occasionally look back upon past times. The town itself indeed, is one of the prettiest in Scotland—at all events of those towns I saw; and the ruins of the abbey—the transept and towers of which are still complete, at the end of nearly a thousand years †—exhibit as beautiful a specimen of Saxon architecture as is to be seen any where. Old Camden's notice of this abbey, by the bye, is not much amiss. "Not far off Hume castle," says he, "lieth Kelso, formerly famous for a monastery,—founded by King

* "Go to the Cock and Gridiron at St. Boswell's," said Lord Kintore in one of his letters. "It will suit your pocket better than Kelso, Barclay and myself once lived there for a fortnight."

† Founded 1128.

David,—the first among thirteen more, *for the propagation of God's glory, but to the great impairing of the crown lands.*" But it was with the situation of Kelso that I was most gratified. It stands in a sort of vale of Tempe, abounding in every thing that pleases the eye of taste; and upon the classic banks of the Tweed and Teviot, who join their waters as they flow through it, are to be seen noble specimens both of nature and of art. The variety of landscape in fact appears to have no bounds when viewed and appreciated in its merely pastoral character; but when associated with the deeds of "auld lang syne," and contrasted with its present peaceable appearance, the soul of that man must be dead indeed who could stand quite unmoved upon Kelso-bridge, on his first visit to this country. At one glance of his eye he could see a palace in which a duke lives; with another, a ruin before which a monarch died. He would see all that remains of by far the strongest of the border fortresses, and observe the ravages the hand of time has made, for he might almost exclaim "periere ruinæ." Of course I am alluding to the castle of Roxburgh on the Duke of Roxburgh's domain; and his recollections of history would furnish him with the names and characters of its illustrious inhabitants in olden times. Kings were born, marriages were celebrated, birth-days were kept within its massive walls, and though last, not least, the crown of Scotland was here tendered to the crown of England. Here then is the transition of all human greatness; for in the words of Dyer, that very celebrated describer of a ruin—

"'Tis now the raven's bleak abode;
'Tis now the apartment of the toad;
And there the fox securely feeds;
And there the poisonous adder breeds,
Conceal'd in ruins, moss, and weeds,

While, ever and anon, there falls
Huge heaps of hoary moulder'd walls.
Yet Time has seen, which lifts the low,
And level lays the lofty brow—
Has seen the broken pile complete,
Big with the vanity of state;
But transient is the smile of fate!
A little rule, a little sway,
A sun-beam in a winter's day,
Is all the proud and mighty have
Between the cradle and the grave."

But Kelso is visited by sportsmen for other purposes than the chase. The fishing in the Tweed—that Rex fluviorum of this country, as Virgil calls the Eridanus of another—seduces numbers to its banks not only from the metropolis of Scotland but also from all parts of England, although it appears from a scientific article on the "gentle art," in your number for May last, the Tweed is now not what the Tweed was, in the angler's eyes, and it appears only to stand third on the list in its own country, and inferior to many rivers in Ireland, in its stock of fish, which is accounted for by the increase of weirs and nets at its mouth, for the supply of the London market. But it is a noble river, and entitled to its share of all the reasonable* praises which have been so lavishly bestowed upon others.

I should imagine most of your readers have perused that beautiful little work upon angling, by the late Sir Humphrey Davy, and appropriately

* The adoration paid to rivers had no bounds. The Eridanus was said to have flowed through Heaven and bathed the gods.—*See Denham's Cooper's Hill.*

called *Salmonia*. Such, however, as have not, will be struck with the following elegant and philosophical comparison of a full and clear river: — "Pliny has,"—says he, p. 175, "as well as I recollect, compared a river to human life. I have never read the passage in his works, but I have been a hundred times struck with the analogy, particularly amidst mountain scenery. The river, small and clear in its origin, gushes forth from rocks, falls into deep glens, and wantons and meanders through a wild and picturesque country, nourishing only the uncultivated tree or flower by its dew or spray. In this, its state of infancy and youth, it may be compared to the human mind in which fancy and strength of imagination are predominant—it is more beautiful than useful. When the different rills or torrents join, and descend into the plain, it becomes slow and stately in its motions; it is applied to move machinery, to irrigate meadows, and to bear upon its bosom the stately barge;—in this mature state, it is deep, strong, and useful. As it flows on towards the sea, it loses its force and its motion, and at last, as it were, becomes lost and mingled with the mighty abyss of waters."

One might pursue the metaphor still further, and say, that in its origin—its thundering and foam, when it carries down clay from the bank, and becomes impure, it resembles the youthful mind, affected by dangerous passions. And the influence of a lake, in calming and clearing the turbid water, may be compared to the effect of reason in more mature life, when the calm, deep, cool, and unimpassioned mind is freed from its fever, its troubles, bubbles, noise and foam. And above all, the sources of a river,— which may be considered as belonging to the atmosphere,— and its termination in the ocean, may be regarded as imaging the divine origin of the human mind, and its being ultimately returned to, and lost in, the infinite and eternal intelligence from whence it originally sprung."

Sunday 23rd. That a bad excuse is better than none, is a truism which cannot be doubted, inasmuch as it is, at all events, an acknowledgment of a fault. I must then offer two apologies for going to my work on the sabbath—first, not being of the Kirk; next, by an arrangement made between the three neighbouring packs to meet on certain days, hounds were to be reached from Dunse and Kelso on every day in the week, and therefore, as my route was marked out for me, this was the only day on which it appeared probable that I could ride over to St. Boswell's, to inspect the Duke of Buccleuch's hunting establishment—a treat I had not the "moral courage," as Dan O'Connell says, to resist. "Peter," said I to him, as I was going to bed on Saturday night, "order me a hack in the morning to take me to St. Boswell's." "Never fear," replied Peter; "a hack shall be at your stables for you, and a good one too."

Oaths, they say, are but words—words but wind; and that such they proved here, will be illustrated by the following dialogue on the morrow.

Nimrod (in a hurry). "Now, Mr. Dickinson,—the hack."

Mr. Dickinson. "The hack, sir!"

Nim. "Yes, the hack Peter ordered for me, last night."

Mr. D. "Peter ordered no hack."

Nim. "Then d—n Peter."

Mr. D. "Well, sir, p'raps Peter had a wee drap too much."

Nim. "But what shall I do? I want to get to St. Boswell's before the hounds are fed, and it is now ten o'clock, and to-morrow a hunting day."

Mr. D. "Well here's the Mi-nis-ter's mare. He'll na want her to-day, and she's getting muckle fat. She'll carry you quite to your leeking."

It is scarcely necessary then to observe, that in little more than an hour from this time, the Minister's mare and Nimrod were at St. Boswell's, about nine miles from Kelso, the distance being impressed upon my memory by the fact of my having, for the first time in my life, paid exactly a penny a mile tollage. The scenery by the road side, however, is more than worth the money.

I confess I anticipated, beyond a sight of the duke's establishment, a great treat in this visit to St. Boswell's. In the first place, a clever huntsman has ever been an object of my early admiration; secondly, knowledge, like honey, being picked up a bit here and a bit there, I was very anxious to have an hour or two's conversation with the very celebrated Williamson, and, as the poet says,

——— "From his lips
Glean Science."

More than this;—although, strictly speaking, Nimrod should be a reporter of actions rather than a painter of characters, yet those of public men being public property—"publica materies," as Horace calls them, and few are more often discussed than a huntsman's—I wished to have

somewhat of a clearer insight into his, than the mere operations in the field would afford me, being persuaded, from all I had heard, that it was by no means an every-day one.

I was much pleased with the site* and business-like appearance of the St. Boswell's kennel and stables, all of which, with the houses of the huntsman and the head groom, present one uniform front, but of course divided into two separate court yards, with large folding gates to each. Nor was I less satisfied with the internal arrangements, which every one who sees them must admit are formed by a master hand, and I have reason to believe the directing hand was that of Williamson himself. But what most surprised me was the moderate charge at which these premises had been erected—namely not quite 1500l., which may also be attributed to the well known good eye to economy, as well as to a country or a fox, which said Williamson is known to possess. In the kennel are ample accommodations for a four or five days in the week pack, which is the best estimate I can make of its size, with my pen; and between the stables of the duke's horses and those of the servants, which form two distinct establishments, are at least forty stalls. In fact I counted nineteen horses in what are called his Grace's stables, and the number of those necessary for servants for four days a week, may very easily be calculated. There is a room in the head groom's house fitted up for the use of the duke, in which a suit of clothes is always kept, well aired, on hunting days; and, in case of being benighted, there is a bed in which a more fastidious duke than his Grace of Buccleuch might find himself quite at his ease, after a good day's sport.

There was a stillness about the kennel as I approached it which con-

* At the head of a small common, intersected with roads.

vinced me that there were no hounds there; and none there proved to be. "I am too late," said I to myself; "they are fed, and gone out for their walk—how unlucky is this!" It, however, proved otherwise; they were not fed, but were merely gone for a walk down the road, with their huntsman and whippers-in on foot, by way of stretching legs, as the term is, for part of the pack had had rather a hard day's work on the yesterday. Now some of my readers — the perfectly uninitiated ones of course—may be at a loss for a reason why hounds should be seen by an amateur previously to, and not after, their being fed, but if they will apply to John Walker, huntsman to the Fife, he will supply that reason in a very few words. A certain general officer went into his kennel, just after his pack had been fed, and made the following sage remark upon them. "Bless my heart," said he, "what a number of these hounds are with pup!" Now, doubtless, had John Walker been talking to the general on the difficult art of fortification, on the subject of royal bastions, or great guns, he might have made an equally sage observation; but the fact is, the line of beauty in a hard-feeding hound, when just flogged away from the trough, is sadly damaged to the eye.

Having deposited the Minister's mare at the Cock and Gridiron, which is within a hundred yards of the kennel, with orders that she should be well taken care of and fed; and, furthermore, wishing to avoid the imputation of having ridden the Minister's mare with hounds on the sabbath, I walked in the direction which the feeder informed me Williamson and his pack had taken, and, in the course of a mile, I met them, in a turn of the road. The sight to myself was a cheering one. Indeed, fifty couples of hounds, in the highest possible condition, joined with the reminiscence of what I had already seen with them, as well as the anticipation of at least a week's diversion in future, was an object very likely to

be so. But my reception by the pack was by no means a gratifying one. Whether or not, like Homer's dogs*, their power of instinct enabled them to determine the nature of the spirit that was come amongst them, I am unable to say; but this much I know,—the bristles of several stood erect, as they surrounded me on the road; and but for Williamson's "*Have a care, Lucy,*" and a smack of his whip, a fine lemon-pied bitch of that name would certainly have had a taste of my haunch, if nothing more. I considered this rather a rare occurrence; for although fox-hounds should not be approached by strangers, without caution, in their kennel, they are, generally speaking, the most inoffensive animals of their entire species when out of it—that is to say, to man.

On our arrival at the kennel, the whole pack were twice walked through the wash-pool in the yard, and after allowing a certain time for them to lick themselves dry, they were drawn by Williamson to the troughs and fed—and having said by whom fed, I need not add in a very workmanlike manner. This wash-pool is now becoming pretty general in kennels, and an excellent expedient I take it to be. By preventing hounds carrying wet dirt and dry mud with them into their beds, it conduces greatly to cleanliness, and is considered a preservative from what is called kennel-lameness. At all events, there was not in this kennel, on the day on which I visited it, one single instance of that destructive disease. The benefit to the feet is self-evident, as the tongue is the dog's doctor for all slight excoriations, to which their feet are so liable, in their work.

A walk through the St. Boswell's stables was to me a high treat, particularly so as I was given to understand that in them the system I have

* Odyssey—Lib. xv.

recommended for treating hunters in the summer is very generally followed*. Neither is the system of clipping—which I have always condemned, and which I shall never cease to condemn, as a mere cheat to the eye, as a violent outrage† on nature, and a substitute for real condition,—adopted, except in cases of extreme necessity, of which there were only two in a stud of this magnitude. These were in horses very irritable when dressed, which, in my opinion, is the best reason for having recourse to the operation of clipping, inasmuch as after a good run in a dirty country, such horses may be said to be doing nearly a second day's work after they return to their stalls. In the account I have written—the first part of which has been published in the New Sporting Magazine—of all the hunters I have myself possessed, will be found the mention of one which could not be dressed at all on the evening of the day he had been ridden with hounds, and consequently had clipping then been in fashion, he would without doubt have been benefitted by it.

The first stable I walked through was that which contained the servants' horses, sixteen in number, amongst which I espied "the old Black Horse," as he is called, that carried Williamson so splendidly throughout the clebrated fifty-five minutes from East Gordon-gorse, of which I have already given an account. He is a low, narrow, but long, deep, and wiry-looking animal, showing a deal of blood, although of rather mean appearance; and, as I was told, was purchased, like many of Williamson's horses, for a very inconsiderable sum. He appeared,

* A very sporting yeoman in the neighbourhood, by the name of Brown, had, a short time before my visit to St. Boswell's, made a present to Hugh Burn, the first whipper-in, of the book called "Nimrod on the Condition of Hunters."

† We do not go the length of our friend Nimrod in condemnation of clipping. We do not see that it is any greater outrage on nature than the general system of equine domestication. However, we readily give insertion to his sentiments, with this salvo for ourselves.—*Editor N. S. M.*

however, quite ready for another day, and, like the rest of the stud, in very excellent condition. To enumerate them all would by no means be desirable, were it in my power to do so; but I am able to give, in a few words, the general character of the servants' horses in the Duke of Buccleuch's hunting establishment, all of which are purchased by Williamson himself—lately, I understood, by his Grace's orders, at something beyond Williamson's estimate of a Scotch hunter's value. They are for the most part light horses, not equal, on the average, to more than from eleven to twelve stone weight, but showing a great deal of high breeding, without which, indeed, they would be often found wanting in parts of the duke's country—particularly over the Cheviot hills.

"But where," said I to Williamson, "is your famous old white horse, of whom I have heard so much?" "Gone earth-stopping with Hugh; I dont ride *him* till the ground gets quite soft," was the reply. "You are right," resumed I; "and if sportsmen in general were not to ride horses of a certain age either early in the autumn, or far on in the spring, they would find a very large balance in their favour at the end of twenty years." There was a clever little chestnut mare in one of the stalls, showing a deal of blood, and, as the dealers say, "as long as a cart rope," which I saw Williamson ride twice when I was in his country,—appearing to be as handy as a fiddle, from the tuition she had experienced at his hand. There was not one lame horse in this stable.

My next visit was to the duke's own stud, nineteen in number, of which two were clipped, for the reason I have already given. Amongst the lot were three or four young horses, going through their education for the field under the able direction of Frank Collison; but the rest were first rate hunters, and more than equal to the duke's weight, as

indeed all men's hunters should be, let their weight be great or small. I only recognized one of the lot, and this was old Alphabet, which his Grace purchased of Lord Lichfield when I was at Melton, together with Jemmy Jumps, for nine hundred guineas, the two; and he appeared to be as fresh as he was then, although now in, at least, his nineteenth year. A finer sample indeed of the British hunter for fourteen stone might be looked for in vain, and the long services he performed for the duke after the many hot shirts he must have had under Lord Lichfield, when his lordship hunted his own hounds in the Atherstone country, proved him to have been made of the right stuff. Doubtless, a more aristocratic looking animal cannot well be imagined, and I hope his Grace has got his picture. The result of my inquiry after Jemmy Jumps was not so favourable. The Anson pace and the hot shirts had made too deep an impression upon him, and, comparatively with the other, he dropped into a premature grave—or, in more appropriate words, had found his way into the copper much before his time. But it is with horses as with men, there are strong distinctions and great differences of excellence betweeen them, and when once a sportsman has found out that he has got a good one, nothing but necessity should induce him to part with him. I think I once proved that a very heavy and hard riding gentleman* saved more than two thousand pounds some years back, by refusing that sum from the late Lord Middleton for two hunters which he had proved to be good ones, and able to stand his weight and pace. But there was another horse in the duke's stud called Jemmy, which, although somewhat low in his back, greatly attracted my notice, appearing to have all the requisites of a hunter for the duke's weight and pace. In my judgment of this horse it appeared I was not mistaken; for on my telling

* The elder Mr. Edge, of Nottinghamshire, so conspicuous amongst the heavy weights.

Lord Elcho that I had seen the St. Boswell's stud, his lordship asked me if I was not much pleased with Jemmy? I took out my pocket-book and showed him that I had noted him as the flower of the flock. I believe Lord Elcho offered a large sum for him, for his own riding.

The condition of the duke's horses was most creditable to his groom; and, as was the case with those under Williamson's care—for they form two separate establishments—every horse was then in work. There was not even a single case of foot-lameness in either of the studs, and I only saw two legs bandaged, to remove some temporary inflammation to which hunters are always subject from blows and other causes. But I must add a few words more on this interesting subject, as well as pleasing one to me, inasmuch as it is a great gratification to be able to speak well of any man, and more especially when writing of that class of men which contribute so much to the pleasures of fox-hunting as a good hunting groom contributes. I am bound to say, then, that independently of his professional skill, of which his horses gave proof, I never met with a more civil, unaffected, or sensible man in his line than Matthew Marshall, the Duke of Buccleuch's head groom. He was brought up in the stables of the Earl of Home, and the duke gives him every chance to be a first rate hunting groom, as he is almost always to be seen in the field, attired in the proper hunting costume of the servant, and mounted on one or another of the duke's own horses, but in a run quite independent of his Grace, who has his pad-boy out on his second horse. The advantages he receives by this are greater than many persons may imagine, who might not have given the subject their full consideration. *He sees and feels his horses in their work;* and thereby partakes of the practical experience which the training groom avails himself of, by his constant presence with his race horses when they are doing, what is called, good work, and

his nearly constant presence at all other times. Matthew, or "Matty" as he is called in Scotland, is in the prime of life—indeed appearing to possess the rare gift of an old head upon young shoulders; particularly neat and clean, and servant-like in his person and demeanour, and a very good horseman.

Now a word or two for old Frank Collison, of whom I have before spoken, and to whom I was mainly indebted for seeing the finish of one of the finest runs ever seen in Scotland. Frank was on the hunting establishment of the late Duke of Buccleuch. He whipped-in to John King for twenty years; then was made huntsman for seven years,—when Williamson became huntsman,—and is now hunting, what may be called the same hounds (though they have changed masters backwards and forwards) his *twentieth* season! He has, I should imagine, arrived at the period which is commonly called "the grand climacteric," although there is nothing in his appearance denoting the usually accompanying decay of either body or mind; and having already said that the young horses in the present duke's stud are made into hunters by Frank, it is almost a waste of words to throw away one about his nerves. As far as I could judge of them, however, and I saw him in some awkward situations—they appeared to resemble the braces of the war-drum, or the cat-gut of a fiddle in high tune, and I doubt not but he is perfectly and happily unconscious of there being such things in his carcass. His dress is likewise worthy of remark, adhering to the old costume of the Scottish huntsman—namely, a black velvet cap, a short red jacket, known by the term spencer, and leather breeches quite as thick as a bullock's hide. The *tout ensemble*, however, is that of the sportsman of the old school, and Frank is a first rate horseman, with a fine bridle hand.

By the way, this was not the first time I had seen, what may be called, the ancient costume of the Scottish fox-hunter. About thirty years back, a Highland infantry regiment was quartered at Wrexham, and several of the officers hunted with Sir Richard Puleston's hounds, in scarlet jackets, fitting tight to the person, which had certainly an outlandish appearance in our eyes, merely because we had never seen them before; but this I remember—it required a good man, on a good horse, to see the way some of those scarlet jackets went.

To return to the kennel, which, after all, will be considered by sportsmen, as the chief object of their visit. It will, however, be borne in mind by them, the serious task I have to perform in offering my remarks upon such an establishment as this—brought to maturity, as it has been, by time and labour, and under the directing eye of one of the first huntsmen of the present age. But I shall not shrink from this hazardous undertaking, for two reasons. First, I build upon the indulgence hitherto shown to my unreserved opinions of what I see in the sporting world; and, secondly, I may here be the means of directing the eye of the young master of hounds to certain points on which may be founded the high character of the Duke of Buccleuch's pack. To this end, then, I must first of all present my readers with a list of the hounds in work last year; and afterwards comment upon a few individuals, whose appearance and actions attracted my notice.

A LIST OF THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH'S HOUNDS.

1834-5.

Ages.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
Years.			
Seven.	Ragman ..	Hector	Mr. Baillie's Ransom
	Rival	Lord Yarborough's Minister	Sir T. Sykes's Ruin

Ages. Years.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
Six.	Jealousy	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Comely
	Joyful	Ditto	Ditto
	Flighty	Duke of Rutland's Hermit	Mr. Foljambe's Favourite
	Charmer	Lord Harewood's Gulliver	Mr. Baillie's Charmer
	Marmion	The Badsworth Major	Badsworth Rosy
	Levity	The Badsworth Whisker	Badsworth Lawless
Five.	Bluemaid	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Lord Harewood's Bountiful
	Barrister	Duke of Beaufort's Brusher	Bashful
	Boxer	Ditto	Ditto
	Novelty	Lord Harewood's Gulliver	Novelty
	Pilot	Ditto	Prudence
	Reveller	Ditto	Racket
	Lucy	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Lord Harewood's Lofty
	Merlin	Lord Harewood's Racer	Lord Harewood's Famous
	Mentor	From Lord Harewood's	
	Sorcerer	Ditto	
Four.	Crowner	Mr. Joliff's Scamperer	Countess
	Clinker	Marker	Charmer
	Harlequin	Lord Harewood's Gilder	Hasty
	Hector	Ditto	Ditto
	Heiress	Ditto	Ditto
	Joysome	Mr. Baillie's Jolly Boy	Fife Modish
	Jasper	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Niobe
	Jewess	Ditto	Ditto
	Juliet	Ditto	Ditto
	Marquis	Marker	Badsworth's Nosegay
	Rally	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Sir T. Sykes's Ruin
	Scamperer	Mr. Joliff's Scamperer	Mr. Baillie's Garland
	Scarbro'	Ditto	Ditto
	Selim	Ditto	Ditto
	Sempstress	Lord Harewood's Gilder	Sempstress
	Spinster	Ditto	Ditto
Three.	Clasher	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Countess
	Countess	Ditto	Ditto
	Curious	Ditto	Ditto
	Riot	Lord Harewood's Gilder	Racket

Ages. Years.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
Three.	Ruin	Ditto	Ditto
	Bilker	Highflyer	Lord Harewood's Bountiful
	Guider	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Mr. Baillie's Garland
	Gamesome	Ditto	Ditto
	Gipsey	Ditto	Ditto
	Lexicon	Ditto	Levity
	Lively	Ditto	Ditto
	Saladin	Lord Harewood's Gilder	Sempstress
	Susan	Ditto	Ditto
	Harriet	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Harriet
	Trimmer	Badsworth Teucer	Bashful
	Needful	Lord Lonsdale's Javelin	Norna
	Dorcas	Lord Fitzwilliam's Duster	Lord Fitzwilliam's Captive
	Fairmaid	Lord Fitzwilliam's Flasher	Lord Fitzwilliam's Daffodil
	Fortune	Ditto	Lord Fitzwilliam's Duchess
	Melody	Lord Fitzwilliam's Match'em	Lord Fitzwilliam's Keepsake
	Lightsome	Lord Fitzwilliam's Lawless	Lord Fitzwilliam's Faithful
Two.	Dædalus	Marquis	Darling
	Danger	Ditto	Ditto
	Dexter	Ditto	Ditto
	Driver	Ditto	Ditto
	Dainty	Ditto	Ditto
	Darling	Ditto	Ditto
	Darter	Lord Yarborough's Darter	Bluemaid
	Famous	Mr. Osbaldiston's Foiler	Mr. Osbaldiston's Promise
	Comely	Duke of Rutland's Chorister	Duke of Cleveland's Melody
	Costly	Ditto	Ditto
	Joker	Mr. Foljambe's Jovial	Mr. Foljambe's Vanity
	Justice	Lord Harewood's Challenger	Jealousy
	Dimity	Lord Middleton's Denmark	Duke of Cleveland's Rantaway
	Nimble	Mr. Osbaldiston's Finder	Nimble
	Why not	Lord Scarbro's Wonder	Lord Scarbro's Susan
One.	Ajax	Lord Yarborough's Auditor	Ruin
	Ardent	Ditto	Ditto
	Archer	Ditto	Ditto
	Auditor	Ditto	Ditto
	Abigail	Ditto	Ditto
	Racer	Duke of Rutland's Rockwood	Heroine
	Regent	Ditto	Ditto

Ages. Years.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
One..	Ringwood.	Ditto	Ditto
	Crafty....	Merlin	Countess
	Crazy	Ditto	Ditto
	Credulous.	Ditto	Ditto
	Cruel	Ditto	Ditto
	Limner....	Ditto	Lucy
	Linguist..	Ditto	Ditto
	Legacy ...	Ditto	Ditto
	Merkin ...	Ditto	Jewess
	Duster....	Boxer	Dorcas
	Fencer....	Mr. Osbaldiston's Finder	Comely
	Fleecer...	Ditto	Riot
	Fallacy...	Ditto	Bluemaid
	Gaylass ..	Lord Harewood's Gilder	Joysome
	Jovial....	Lord Yarborough's Chorister	Jealousy
	Harmony .	Duke of Rutland's Layman..	Hasty
	Hasty....	Ditto	Ditto
	Cygnet ...	Duke of Rutland's Chorister	Duke of Cleveland's Margaret
	Frolic....	Duke of Cleveland's Forester	Duke of Cleveland's Melody
	Mystery ..	Duke of Cleveland's Morrison	Duke of Cleveland's Hastily
	Rosebud..	Duke of Rutland's Rallywood	Duke of Cleveland's Minikin

Layman, Rockwood, } from the Duke of Rutland's
Warrior, from the Warwickshire kennel
Justice, from Lord Scarbro's
Lashwood, from Lord Lonsdale's
} Stud Hounds.

1 Couple run 6 Seasons.		10½ Couple run 2 Seasons	
3 Do.	— 5 do.	7½ Do.	— 1 do.
5 Do.	— 4 do.	14 Do. Young Hounds.	
8 Do.	— 3 do.	2½ Do. Stud Hounds.	

Total—Fifty-one and a half Couples.

The first thing that must strike even a casual observer in perusing the above list, is the pains Williamson has taken in procuring what he has considered the best blood, as in a kennel of forty-nine and a half couples

of hounds, only the odd nine and a half couples are got by his own hounds*; and out of sixty-two brood-bitches, twenty-four only are those of his own breeding. The good effect of this, however, is apparent at the conclusion of the list, where we find all the young hounds (i. e. those of one year old) except four, are out of his own bitches. Contrast this with Mr. Ralph Lambton's list of the same year, and what is the result? In a kennel containing thirteen couples more hounds, we find that long established and first-rate sportsman has only used twelve stud hounds, and eight brood bitches, *not* of his own blood, which leads to the conclusion, that the one—Williamson—is arriving at perfection in his kennel, and that the other—Mr. Lambton—has attained it. It will also be observed that Williamson drafts with an unsparing hand, as the Duke of Buccleuch's present pack do not average more than a hound and a half to a litter.

Of course the stud hounds—three couples in all, although only two and a half are in the list—did not escape my observation. I considered Warrior, from the Warwickshire, a very coarse hound, although with useful points; but I hope Williamson will be cautious how he breeds from the Beaufort hound, as he possesses, to a great degree, one of the worst defects the form of a hound can possess, namely, the outward direction of the elbow. To my eye, an out-elbowed hound, and a pigeon-toed horse, cannot be reconciled even by their goodness, which indeed, where speed and endurance are wanted, they very rarely possess. The name of the Beaufort hound is Guardian, and I believe he was sent to the duke by Lord Redesdale.

I may as well at once give my opinion of the Duke of Buccleuch's

* Hector, Marker, Highflyer, Marquis, Merlin, and Boxer.

pack, as reserve it for a future opportunity, for in fact my experience of them is equally available, and, as the old proverb saith, "there is nothing like the present time." Individually, there are amongst them hounds on which the eye of the sportsman—the real admirer of the animal—would scarcely tire to dwell. Passing over the old hounds—though not forgetting Blue-maid, and Boxer, and Novelty, among the five year olds,—where could we mend Harlequin, Hector, and Heiress, amongst the four year old? or Rally, or Spinster, or that rich-coloured bitch Sempstress—a great favourite with Williamson, who I observed often spoke to *Seam*stress? Then Countess, and Curious, Gamesome and Gypsey, Trimmer and Bilker, not forgetting Susan—among the three year olds; and Comely and Costly among the two year olds—Rutland and Cleveland blood—perfect beauties of their kind. Here then, surely, I must stop! Oh no; I cannot pass over the young Merlin hounds, out of Countess and Lucy, but only with this slight notice, as I shall have something to say of them at a more fitting opportunity.

Collectively—or, in more appropriate language, as a pack—my opinion of these hounds was given in a letter I wrote to Mr. Lambton from Scotland, informing him of my intended visit to him on my return home, and in precisely these words:—"I think Williamson can show twenty couples of bitches, and ten of dog hounds that it would be very difficult to beat *in any kennel in England*—of the same standard of course." The opinion, however, of those (competent to give one of course) who have been where I have not been, for the last five years—that is, amongst the crack packs of England—is better worth having than mine; and it is the opinion of several sportsmen who are able to judge of them, in actual comparison with others, that the Duke of

Buccleuch's pack ranks third or fourth amongst the crack packs of the kingdom. All I can add is, long may it continue to do so.

In the field. To enable a man to form a correct estimate of the merits or demerits of fox-hounds in the field, he ought to hunt more with them than it was in my power to hunt with these. He should in fact see them in all situations and difficulties in which hounds are seen—on good scenting days and on bad; in wind and in storm; with a good fox and a bad one; amidst every description of riot, and amidst it at all times of the day; and at all periods of their work; when much pressed upon by horsemen; at the end of a severe burst, as well as at the finish of a long run. In each of these situations, with the exception of high wind, have I seen the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds, although not often. With allowance for this circumstance, then, must my opinion be received.

In chase. Whether hounds can carry a good head, depends upon two things—a good fox and a good scent. Whether they can carry it to the end of a severe run also depends upon two things—good condition, and judgment in drafting the pack. With one exception, which I shall allude to hereafter, the Duke of Buccleuch's pack appeared to me to be sufficiently perfect in this respect. As to riot—I never saw them amongst roe-deer, but amongst hares no hounds need be steadier. Indeed from the opportunity Williamson has in the summer of walking them through hares, and drawing the small clumps in the park, where they abound, they cannot well be otherwise, manned as they are.

As to nose—it is the fashion of the day to doubt the low-scenting powers of very high-bred fox-hounds, but this results from prejudice.

Beckford properly remarks, that he can easily conceive a fox-hound to be too low-bred to be good in chase, but the reverse was to him irreconcilable, and so it is to me. What is meant by a high-bred fox-hound but one the most highly refined , and therefore the most perfect, of his species ? As for myself, I never will believe but that, at the end of ten minutes, *best pace*, the high-bred fox-hound, at a ticklish point, is worth half a dozen Towlers and Jowlers with their tongues out, and dead blown. But they—i. e. the high-bred ones—are apt to be " a leetle in a hurry," as Tom Rose said of his, and will now and then overrun the point, with a crowd of horsemen at their heels. As far however as my observation carried me, the duke's hounds stand pressing about as well as most others do at the present day. " I care not whose they are," Tom Wingfield used to say, " they will all fly over it now and then."

In cover. I have heard it said, and I have read in print, that these hounds are rather slack in facing strong gorse covers. I must say I saw nothing of the sort ; but shall presently produce a fact quite *au contraire*. Without a scent, I call them very fair drawers ; with a scent, the strongest gorse in Roxburghshire will not stop them out, and I here speak from facts. On this part of my subject, then, I need not add more than that the sportsman who is not satisfied with the performance of the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds—not quite faultless perhaps—in the field, must be very difficult to please; and still more fastidious must be the eye which is not delighted with their appearance in the kennel. They may be said to want nothing but a better country, for from what I saw and heard of that hunted from the Dalkeith kennel—the East Lothain —it is very so-so. On this subject, however, the less said the better; for if there were to be no fox-hounds kept except in good countries, there would not, according with some persons' estimation of them, be

more than half a dozen packs in the whole world. On the contrary, every encouragement should be given to resident noblemen and gentlemen to hunt their own countries, whether good or bad, the beneficial effects of which are so powerfully felt in their neighbourhood.

HAVING spoken of the hounds, the huntsman necessarily follows. But my notice of the Duke of Buccleuch's huntsman in the field will be brief; for if, as Livy said of Cicero, "Cicero's panegyrist, should be a Cicero," Williamson's should, for the same reason, be a Williamson. He may have his faults, (and where is human nature found perfect?) but, inasmuch as experience is said to make even a fool wise, it is next to a physical impossibility, that a man possessed of an understanding so naturally clear, a man of such quick apprehension, and so clear-sighted a discerner of *circumstances*, as one hour's conversation with Williamson plainly shows him to be—it is, I repeat, next to a physical impossibility that, at the end of thirty-two years experience of hunting, he is not a master of his art. There are peculiarities in his system which have been noticed, and to which I may slightly allude. He has been described as a slack drawer of his covers, "not going into them, as he should do, with his hounds;" and he has also been blamed for *always* drawing down wind. With respect to the first charge, if hounds will draw without it, it is a cruel practice to ride horses into thick gorse covers, as the appearance of their knees and legs too plainly shows on the morrow. The question then is—Does Williamson find his foxes as often as he ought to find them, or does he draw over them? As far as my experience went, there was no lack of foxes on foot; and as he seldom kills less than fifty brace of them in the season, and sometimes more, his country must be well peopled with them indeed if he draws over many.

As to the charge of "*always* drawing his covers down wind," it is not true. I saw him draw several up wind, or with a side wind, although I believe the first is his general practice, and was that of his first master, Mr. Baird. It is, however, by no means a settled point amongst sportsmen that covers should be always drawn up wind; but two things are quite certain.—Many good foxes won't wait to be found if drawn upon down wind, and therefore have an advantage over hounds; and many are chopped in their kennel asleep, or killed by jumping up in the middle of the pack, by drawing up wind. What did I witness the very last time Mr. Osbaldeston's hounds drew Parson's-gorse, in the (Quorn) Widmerpool country, when drawing up wind? A fine bitch fox killed with six whelps in her belly, having suffered every hound to pass over her, when asleep. When she did get out of her kennel she could not break view; but this proves that the advantage of encouraging hounds to draw gorse by the drag was here sought for in vain. Neither fox nor hare emit a scent of much avail to hounds, when either in kennel or on the seat.

It appeared to me that Williamson was very fair to his foxes—no mobber of them for the sake of the noses on the door. The very act of his so often drawing down wind confirms this, as it is evidently in favour of his fox. Beckford gives two reasons for drawing up wind, one of which is good; the other, good for nothing. "If you draw up wind," says he, "the fox does not hear you coming, and your hounds, by this means, are never out of your hearing; besides, if he turns down wind, as most probably he will, it lets them all in." His first position, of the pack being within hearing, is a correct one; his second, of the chances in favour of the line the fox takes, is not so. A fox found by hounds never consults the wind till he is more or less pressed; his first object is his point, which he will make if he can.

Again —if a fox gets a little start of hounds, out of cover, the circumstance itself is more in favour of a run than when he is drawn up to in his kennel, and breaks with the pack at his brush. With the present greyhound-like speed of hounds, and with even a tolerable scent, he is soon driven from his point; runs short or gets into a drain; or else is run into in the first ten minutes to the great disappointment of the field, particularly where foxes are scarce. But with all my admiration of Beckford, he was evidently a mobber of foxes, and such by his own showing. "A fair sportsman," says he, "and a foolish sportsman, are synonymous. Sport is but a secondary consideration with a true fox-hunter; the first is, *the killing of the fox.* I confess, I esteem blood so necessary to a pack of fox-hounds, that, with regard to myself, I always return home better pleased with an indifferent chase, with death at the end of it, than with the best chase possible, if it ends with the loss of the fox." My sentiments on the subject of blood have been so often before the public, that it is unnecessary to repeat them here, but they are not in accordance with Mr. Beckford's.

Although the finding a fox handsomely is no light accomplishment in a huntsman, it is in the various difficulties which occur in the chase that his ability is chiefly displayed. In Williamson's country these difficulties abound. It is much stained by sheep, and infested by sheep dogs; it contains every variation of soil—some very good, some very bad, each perhaps in the space of a mile; and the frequent strips of plantations cause foxes to run short. From the numerous covers, he is also liable to change. With these difficulties, however, Williamson contends with a master hand. His approach to his hounds, when at fault, pleased me much. He trots up to them with an anxious but scrutinizing eye, and after a rapid glance at what they are doing, pulls up his horse, dead, and

with his hand raised in the air, calls to his field to "STAND STILL." He is not at all in a hurry; I never saw him refuse to give his hounds a chance, so long as a chance remained; but I saw two instances of his taking them to their fox in a very superior manner, when, but for him, he would have been lost. One was by a cast short back, and the other forward, to a drain, each of which will be noticed as they occurred. His voice is not good, but, as somebody said, "it is as God made it," and therefore it would be wrong to find fault with it; and although one or two of his holloas are not very intelligible to strangers, they are well understood by his hounds, and that is their chief use. Strange to say, he is the only Scotch servant hunting hounds in Scotland, or anywhere else that I know of, a circumstance on which he prides himself, and he may be allowed to do so.

I have before spoken of the lengthened experience of this celebrated huntsman, and there are few practical operations in which that valuable accomplishment is more required than in that of hunting hounds. But, as Byron says,

> "A man must serve his time to every trade
> *Save censure,*—critics all are ready made."

Williamson was fourteen years whipper-in, and ten huntsman, under old Mr. Baird, and commenced as whipper-in under the renowned John King who was huntsman to the two masters,—the late Duke of Buccleuch and Mr. Baird—for thirty years.—He married King's daughter, and cherishes his maxims as he cherishes his wife,—and I believe no man makes a kinder husband than he does. He, however, told me a good story of himself and King. Having one day, when in his noviciate, some difficulty in getting some tail hounds out of cover, after the body

were gone away with their fox, he had recourse to an expedient which he found to answer. He put his finger in his ear and cried "*Tally-ho*," at the same time giving some rattling view holloas. Unfortunately for him, the fox headed short back, and King coming up to the cover at the moment, with rather an indifferent scent, away flew his hounds to these cheering view holloas of the young whip, and left him to hunt his fox himself. "'Gad," said Williamson, "I got such a strapping from King that I never cried 'Tally-ho' to tail hounds again." I have also another anecdote of Williamson and King. A daughter of the former being unwell, the doctor said he feared her lungs were affected. "What does the doctor mean," said Williamson, "by talking such nonsense as that? A child of mine, and out of a daughter of John King, with bad lungs! Nay, nay—that cannot be." Nor was it so, for his daughter soon recovered her health, but not without the life of her mother being "jeopardized," as Williamson called it, by the rash prediction of the doctor. Williamson certainly has the lungs of a Stentor.

As a horseman, I have no hesitation in pronouncing Williamson pre-eminent both as to seat and hand; and although he may have lost a little of the dash that seldom accompanies us beyond our fortieth year*, I have reason to believe, that take him for all in all—

> "O'er the plains, or in the dell,
> O'er the mountain's savage swell,"

there is no man in Scotland who rides nearer to hounds than he does, the whole season throughout. And considering the number of years he has

* I take Williamson's age to be about forty-five, but I omitted ascertaining the fact. In what is called "a hill run," I believe all men take their hats off to him. His light weight of course tells.

been with hounds, and the nature of the country in which he has followed them, he has been particularly lucky in his falls, of which no doubt he has had his share. He never broke more than one bone, and that was in a fall on the road, a very few seasons back, and I will give his account of the accident, and the treatment he received after it. Having pitched on the point of his shoulder, as well as from certain sensations he experienced, he apprehended a fracture to have taken place. The country doctor could find none, and the consequence was, twelve days of severe suffering, and as many nights without sleep. "This will not do," said the duke to him. "You must go immediately to Edinburgh and let Liston see you." That skilful surgeon soon detected a fracture close to the shoulder joint, and having reduced it, sent his brother sportsman* home to Dalkeith in his own carriage, quite free from pain. Having said this, it is scarcely necessary to state that Williamson made one of the very numerous party at the dinner given to his skilful surgeon, and brother sportsman, on his quitting Edinburgh for the English metropolis, of whom the following anecdote is told relative to his practice.

A female patient had the misfortune to lose her nose, and he made her a new one, by the late clever invention of drawing down the skin of the forehead and filling it with some soft substance. "Now is your time," said he, as he was forming it; "will you have a Roman or a Grecian nose?" "Non cuicunque datum est habere nasum,"—some people, says Martial, are denied this feature altogether; and if its only use was to curl it in scorn or in pride, as he (Martial) implies, its absence might be dispensed with in the human race, however indispensable in the canine.

* Mr. Liston was for many years a constant attendant on hounds in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, particularly on those hunted by Williamson.

Men certainly run great risks who follow hounds in rough and wild countries. Williamson and his first whipper-in were in some peril for their lives last winter, and I will detail the circumstances of the case, as they were detailed to me by the latter. The hunted fox faced the Cheviot hills towards the close of a cold day in January, and all the field dropped astern after ascending to a certain point, with the exception of Williamson and himself, whose duty compelled them to proceed. After a time, they also lost sight of the hounds from two distinct causes. First they were somewhat defeated by the pace; secondly, a mist came on, which prevented their distant view. Williamson, however, pushed forward in the line he thought they were taking, and, fortunately, getting to windward of them was able at length to hear, and finally to stop them. But what was their situation then? The mist became a fog, and they found themselves worse than benighted, without rule or compass, in a wild and trackless region, many hundred yards above the level of the sea. Surely the goddess of the chase must have befriended them; for, as if she had sent him thither for the purpose, a farmer, who had been looking after his sheep, and had also got out of his latitude, crossed their path, and with great difficulty conducted them into a road that led them as well as himself towards their wished-for home. It is more than questionable whether they would have survived the night, had they been condemned to pass it on the mountain. Hence the necessity of every fox-hunter in wild countries, having—after the manner of old Corcoran—a small flask of brandy in the side-pocket, which would, in this case, have confirmed its title to the rank it holds in the French vocabulary—namely "the water of life*."

* Perhaps many of your present readers may not have seen my account of the sayings and doings of this conspicuous character in the late Lord Derby's (stag) hunt. Being apparently dead from a fall, the question was asked—"*Has no one got any*

The stature of Williamson is below the average height of man, but his person is well turned and very well proportioned; and the exact fit of his clothes sets it off to advantage. The sit of his cap, the fall of his shoulders, and the junction of the breeches with the boots—a great point in a horseman, as far as the eye is concerned—are all equally good; and the general cleanliness of his person, renders the *tout ensemble* complete. He has a keen, penetrating eye; carries his country in his face, as well as its full dialect on his tongue; is, as Lord Kintore says of him, "an astonishing bit of wire—a sort of *genus per se*—and the king of Scotch servants." No doubt he bears the palm.

To draw a man's physical and moral portrait on one and the same page is no easy task, nevertheless so signal a character, and one so universally known throughout Scotland and indeed throughout England, as Williamson's, cannot be passed over by me with merely a common notice. It may, however, be said, I shall colour the picture too highly, and subject myself to the charge of flattery. To this I have an answer at command:—If a man deserves praise, we cannot refuse it him without injustice; but he who expects it on any other terms, demands what he has no claim to—at all events he will never receive it at my hands. And I have other reasons for dwelling a little on this individual point. I have ever been an admirer of a vigorous, even if it be an unpolished style, of writing or speaking; and there is a singular perspicuity of expression in the person upon whom I am now commenting, that I know not when I met with before. It has been justly remarked of Homer, that what he says he says properly; and without the abatement of a fraction, the compliment may be transferred to Williamson. Having said this, it may

brandy?" by way of the last resource. "You will find some in my side-pocket," whispered the dead man, with a sigh.

well be imagined that I gladly availed myself of his invitation to an arm chair in his parlour, with the prospect of an hour or two's conversation with him on subjects which have ever been most interesting to me.

Our walk through the kennels and stables having occupied all the forenoon, it was now two o'clock, and in five minutes afterwards Williamson's roast beef appeared on the table. Now, although I was engaged to dine at Kelso at seven, there was no resisting that, and down we sat to it tête-à-tête in good earnest. Here then was an opportunity that might never occur to me again of strengthening or refuting my opinions on matters relating to the chase, and in the course of our conversation I questioned him on the following points:—First—on the value of what is called blood to hounds? and his answer delighted me, by reason of its being so entirely in accordance with my own, which has already been made public. "I think," said he, "blood is of the utmost importance to the well-doing of fox-hounds, if had *whilst the stimulus of the chase is existing*, but of little or none afterwards. I consider it very satisfactory, consequently very beneficial to hounds to mark their fox to ground; and am inclined to believe, that a repetition of losing their foxes, makes hounds slack, with an indifferent scent."

Secondly—To the question of whether large or small hounds were preferable? he thus judiciously replied. "The choice somewhat depends on the nature of the country they are wanted for. Well-bred small hounds must have the advantage of large ones equally well-bred, in very close countries, and amongst hills; but I have reason to believe, that large hounds are generally speaking more sure of their fox than small ones. They are more patient, and not so much given to quit the line of scent." This, I know, is the opinion of Foster, huntsman to Mr. Villebois,

who, like the Duke of Buccleuch, has a small and a large pack; and if my recollection serves me, is that of the Duke of Cleveland, who also sorted his pack by the standard, until he reduced his kennel to its present limited extent.

"Mr. Williamson," said I; "it is my wish to ask you a question, which probably was never put to you before. Do you, or do you not, believe, that the scent of some foxes is stronger or weaker than that of others? In other words—do you conceive that all foxes impart a similar degree of scent to hounds, leaving out of the question any particular period of the chase?" Somewhat to my surprise, he candidly informed me, that the nature of the question I had put to him had never once come under his consideration, and therefore at the moment the subject dropped. This notion—the various degrees of scent, has by some been looked upon as chimerical and visionary, and by others totally disregarded; but, although it would be difficult to support it by facts, my experience justifies me in asserting that I believe such to be the case. At all events, natural knowledge being a sort of common to which every person has an equal right, and is at liberty to erect any system he may think proper upon it, according to his own taste, I have availed myself of the right, and have made up my mind on this subject. The phenomena of fox-hunting can only be accounted for by such means; and I was glad to find my opinion backed by your correspondent Skim, (in your last May number,) in his practical and judicious remarks on Mr. Grantley Berkeley's system of managing hounds in the kennel and in the field.

Let me digress for a moment here. Although the phenomenon of scent appears beyond our ken, it is my intention soon to offer my sentiments

on the subject, how much soever I may fail in the bold attempt. I therefore pass over a day or two in my journal to give the result of Williamson's consideration of this material point. The next time I met him in the field he thus addressed me.

"I awoke at four o'clock," said he, "on the morning after you were at St. Boswell's, and the first thing that came across my mind was the question you put to me respecting the difference of scent in different foxes, and I have given it a good deal of consideration since. I can safely speak to one fact which bears strongly upon it, and favours your argument that such is the case. In the course of my life it is natural to suppose that I have had a vast number of dead foxes in my hands, both before and after they have been broken up by hounds. I can safely assert, that on my return home, the smell left upon them by some foxes has been got rid of with only a slight washing, whereas that left by others has continued till the next day." This I consider to be in part confirmatory of my notion that the strength of the effluvia emitted by foxes varies to a considerable extent, but I shall have much more powerful reasons to offer for it, when I take up my pen on the subject.

To return to the arm chair—and to the reminiscence of two or three hours as interesting conversation as I ever chanced to be engaged in. "You noticed to me," said Williamson, "a fine bitch called Heiress." "I did," was my reply, "for she struck me as being a perfect specimen of the modern fox-hound." "I will tell you a story about her," resumed Williamson. "A young man came to the kennel, one day lately, expressing a wish to see the hounds, and declaring himself to be a disciple of Messrs. Gall and Spurzheim, and consequently a believer in the new-fashioned doctrine of phrenology." "And pray," inquired I, "what

was the result of his examination of the various skulls?" "A most unfortunate one," answered Williamson. "He selected two, one as the best and another as the worst-scenting hounds in the whole pack—naming Heiress as the latter. Now it so happens, that the one he selected as the best is nearly the worst in the kennel; and a better-nosed bitch than Heiress no man ever holloaed to, or saw." So much then for phrenological developments, as regards the canine race, and for my own part, I have but little faith in them in the human. Of all the parts of the body, the anatomy of the brain is the most complex, and the most able physiologist of the day cannot determine its organs. But this convert to the fanciful theory should have looked for other developments in fox-hounds than the mere faculty of smelling, and such instinctive faculties;—for the organs of combativeness and destructiveness;—for those of murder and theft, and other brute feelings. The physiognomist, I should imagine, to have a better chance in a kennel, as all sportsmen allow there is much in the countenance of a dog, and what is called "*a thorough fox-hound head*," is very indicative of goodness. Surely the doctrine of Gall and Spurzheim has lived its little hour.

One distinguishing feature in the character of Williamson is what is termed good management, in other words, economy in the distribution of expense. "What a Chancellor of the Exchequer he would make!" we hear one man say. "He would be the best *poor man's* servant in the world," says another. But Williamson's reason for still adhering to that strict economy, vulgarly called "close shaving," now he is a rich man's servant, does him no discredit, if not pushed too far. "I found the duke rich," said he to me, "and it is my wish that he should remain rich." Would that this maxim were more generally acted upon than it is; there would be fewer old inheritances in the market; fewer mortgaged estates;

fewer poor gentlemen. The subject that led to this conversation was the building of the kennel and stables at St. Boswell's, which was entirely under the direction of this most valuable servant, who confirmed what I had heard—namely, that the expense of erecting and completing the entire range of the premises, sufficient for the two establishments, did not exceed the sum of fifteen hundred pounds! A humorous anecdote or two resulted from this portion of our conversation. "I was paying a bill to a farmer, for hay," said Williamson, "a short time ago, of nearly fifty pounds, and he *insisted* upon the odd four-pence half-penny. I gave it him," said he, "with pleasure, *because it showed I had bought the hay worth the money.*" This rigid economy throughout the various departments of so large an establishment as the duke's, must be very profitable to the duke but by no means so to his huntsman, who, by his own account, receives but few invitations to good dinners, or other little compliments too often shoved into the bills; "But," says the latter, "I sleep all the better for that. In the first place, my stomach is not clogged with too many of the good things of this world; and in the second, my conscience is quite at ease."

But in some things, the duke has been obliged to insist upon a partial relaxation of this, now somewhat uncalled for, frugality—and especially in the puchase of horses, the value of which in Williamson's opinion is scarcely one half of what it is generally booked at in that of others. Since his Grace has let loose the purse-strings which his trusty servant had previously held so tightly, I was given to understand a considerable improvement had been effected in the kennel stud; and certainly that which I saw could not even with his—Williamson's—judicious catering, have been procured at his price, which was but a *leetle over* forty pounds. On this subject, as may be supposed, some good stories are

afloat; and amongst others, the recapitulation of a scene that took place between a celebrated London dealer and Williamson, on the only appearance of the latter in the grand metropolis of the world. Scene—the dealer's yard.

Dealer. "I should be proud of the honour of selling a horse to the Duke of Buccleuch's huntsman, and especially so to Mr. Williamson, of whom I have heard so much."

Williamson. "Wall, sir—I have no objection to buy a horse of you, or of any other man, provided I can buy him upon rea-so-nable terms.

A horse is brought out; the dialogue thus proceeds; and, as may be supposed, very soon concludes.

Williamson. "Not a bad-like beast that; pray what do you ask for him?"

Dealer. "A hundred and fifty guineas!"

Williamson. "Eh, sir; we can buy better horses than this in Scotland for less than half that money."

I need scarcely add—*Exeunt omnes.*

But a still better anecdote relating to Williamson and his horse-dealing speculations was told to me by the gentleman with whom it originated—namely, Captain Elliot, of his majesty's royal navy, brother to the Scottish baronet of that honourable name; and whom I had the pleasure

of meeting during my visit to Mellerstain. The captain, it appeared, had lately returned from sea, having been for some time on a foreign station, and immediately purchased for himself a hunter. Now two things must be premised ere I proceed in my tale. Either Williamson had never seen the captain before, or, having seen him, had forgotten him. Again, the captain was in Mufti*, which never adds to the outward and visible sign of any gentleman-sportsman in the field, at least in a huntsman's eyes. Again—captains in the navy (at least I can answer for one, a particular friend of mine, who makes a perfect non-descript† of himself when he takes the field; but, as the poet says,

——————— "What's the gay dolphin
When he quits the waves and bounds upon the shore?")

are apt to be less observant of costume than when at home on the quarter deck; and there is no disguising the fact, that Williamson the first time he saw Captain Elliot on the newly purchased grey, did not take him to be, what he really is, a well-bred gentleman. The following various conversations then, which the captain recapitulates with the greatest candour—indeed with apparent satisfaction—took place between them at the different periods of their meeting at the cover side.

First period. Williamson speaks.

"Not a bad-looking rough beast that of your's. What age is he?"

* The word "Mufti," in the hunting field, means anything but a red coat.

† Don't let it be imagined that I place Captain Elliot amongst the non-descripts. Far from it; but such was the plainness of his attire the first day I saw him in the field, that, until I heard him speak, I was myself at a loss as to what order he might belong.

The Captain. "Six years old."

Williamson. "Wall—I shouldn't mind giving you *thirty pounds* for him, that is to say—if you can warrant him sound, and *quite free from fault.*

The Captain. (Enjoying the joke.) "I dont want to sell him just yet." The fact is, that though "the grey" was then out of condition, he proved to possess all those good qualities of a hunter that Williamson's keen eye anticipated.

Williamson. "Wall, wall; perhaps you may alter your mind."

Second period. Williamson speaks:—"Wall, you have not sold the grey horse. He looks nothing worse since I saw him last. Indeed, I think he's something better. I shouldn't mind giving you *forty* pounds for him, that is to say, if you can warrant him sound, and *quite free from fault.*"

The Captain. "I do not intend to sell him yet."

Third period. Previously to this, Williamson had found out the error he had fallen into, and the dialogue is resumed in an altered tone.

Williamson. "I have many apologies to make to you, sir, for the le-berty I took in asking you to sell your horse. I was not aware whom I had the honour of speaking to; but (still trying it on) I think you did quite right in refusing my *fifty* pounds for him." (Observe, forty was the maximum sum offered.)

Fourth period. "Wall, captain—your horse is vary much improved. Perhaps you may be going to sea again; if you do, I shall be glad to give you *saxty* pounds for him."

The next subject we discussed was that of the annual expense of a pack of fox-hounds, and which was rendered more interesting to me from a knowledge of the fact of Williamson having made public a statement of the disbursements under each separate head of the Lothian hounds, previously to their becoming the property of the Duke of Buccleuch, for a period of seven years—namely, from August 1814, to August 1821, the average amount of which was 988l. 10s. 1d. for a three times-a-week country. The average annual keep of the hounds—price of meal varying from 88l. to 153l. per annum during the period—was 193l. Of horse flesh, from 17l. to 52l. Of keep of horses, 377l.; the residue of the sum total being disbursed in the wages and clothing of servants, earth-stopping, and other incidental expenses. A strict economy must have been observed here, the amount being much under the general calculation; and this induced me to ask what were the disbursements of the present establishment, independent, of course, of the duke's own stud? Williamson's answer, I confess, surprised me. "They do not," said he, "exceed 1500l. per annum, including all charges; but a great advantage is gained by going to market for every thing with cash in hand. It is by attention to what appear little matters that the great saving is effected. Now I know a gentleman who never returns the empty sacks. Was ever such a thing heard of," continued he, with a strong emphasis on his words—"*was there ever such a thing heard of* as a person not returning the empty sacks?"

We were now got into the second glass of whiskey toddy. "Ferin-

tosh, Mr. Williamson," I presume, said I, "for it is most excellent liquor!" "If you will look on the head of the cork," he replied, "you will know as much of it as I do;" and there, I found, very intelligibly impressed on black wax, the following words—*Who the devil sent you this?* All the remark that I made on this curious inscription was, that I cared not who the devil sent me some of the same sort—nay, if it was the devil himself I would forgive him; for better no man has tasted. How different said I to myself from those

> ——— "Most poisonous compounds
> Which are the movers of a languishing death;
> But, though slow, deadly!"

I have ever considered really good whiskey the most wholesome spirit that is drunk by man, and I found no more effect, on my arrival at Kelso to a seven o'clock dinner, from these two glasses of pretty stiff whiskey toddy than I should have found had I been only drinking small beer. Perhaps not so much; for small beer and Scotch night air are not well agreed. I have however reason to believe that a second glass of whiskey toddy is not often indulged in by Williamson. He is not only a remarkably sober man himself, but drunkenness, he told me, is a fault he never looks over *even once*, in any man belonging to his department of the duke's establishment, whatever good qualities the delinquent may possess. Perhaps he is right; for inasmuch as the doctrine of evil communication corrupting good manners is no less true in philosophy than in religion, it must surely be allowed to be applicable to the stable and kennel.

But it is surely now time that the minister's mare and Nimrod should be on their return to Kelso; and particularly so as a thick fog was at this

moment descending that made it somewhat doubtful if they got thither at all—at least that night. My brother sportsmen, however, will pardon my dwelling a little on the line here, and those who are not sportsmen are aware how the human soul delights to recall its past pleasures; in fact, as Martial says, in his famous epitaph,

——— "Hoc est
Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui."

Let me then sit a few minutes longer in the arm-chair, waiting for the fog to clear up, and give one other specimen of my host's singular manner of expressing himself: "Allow me to ask you, Mr. Williamson," said I, "did you ever see a *perfect* hound?"—"Why," replied he, "I was once asked that question before, and my answer was, one might just as well expect to find a human being that had never deviated from the moral law, as a fox-hound that would not *sometimes* do wrong." I was much amused at this singular but pithy remark, rendered doubly impressive by the forcible manner in which it was delivered, and I could not help thinking it might have served for a comment upon the philosophy of Plato. Man is the same now as he was in the days of Solomon; the impulse of his nature is strong but his morality is weak, and no mortal can repair what Adam destroyed. Thus is it with brutes. He that seeks to extinguish every unruly passion—every vicious propensity—by an absolute control of their nature, will find himself mistaken, and with the one, as with the other, few have the merit to walk erect in a slippery path.

"Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret."

It is natural to suppose that no man so independent in circumstances as Williamson is known to be, would remain in servitude and hunt a

pack of hounds, unless he were a real enthusiast in the noble sport. The following anecdote is very demonstrative of the exhilirating effect of a fine run upon such a temperament as his—in short upon a real lover of fox-hunting. "Faith," said one of his daughters to her little brother one day, "gin you want ony thing of your fether, noo is the time; he's just come home, *vary much pleased with a that he has done.*" But when shall I stop if I indulge in a recapitulation of all the anecdotes I have heard related of this extraordinary man. His zeal in the chase has given birth to many. Coming once to a check in the great north road, he found a horseman there in the midst of the pack. "*What the h—ll brings you here?*" roared Williamson, taking him of course for one of his field who had got a head of his hounds by some unfair nick; little thinking that he was addressing a commercial traveller on his journey from London. But fancy a member of this useful fraternity get so far on his road to the good town of Edinburgh; having worked his way

"Per varios casus et tot discrimina rerum,"

through good report and evil report, bad debts and good ones, large orders and small ones, doing his utmost for his employers, and *then* to be asked by a huntsman, "*What the h—ll brought him there!*" To me the circumstance is irresistibly ridiculous, and I confess I should have greatly enjoyed the scene. Under similar circumstances he once came across an unfortunate horse-breaker, on a two year old colt, and mistaking him also for a M'Adamizing sport-spoiler, roared lustily out to him to "sta-and still." Finding, however, he might as well have roared to the rocks, or to the waves, he as lustily called to him to *turn his horse**." "Hoo shall I turn him?" said the fellow in reply, "he's

* It may be well to explain to some of your readers that, when hounds are quite off the scent, they are apt to go in the direction they see horses going. Sportsmen, therefore, turn their horses towards the likely point.

na been moonted before to-day, and he's sair afraid your dogs will devour him." "Then Williamson can blow up a little now and then?" I think I hear some of my readers exclaim. Let Mr. Cosser of Dunse, one of his oldest friends and greatest admirers, answer this question, because it will make such readers smile. "Hold hard, Mr. Cosser," said he one day to him on a road, "*hold hard*, I tell you; what the devil are you aboot, driving the hounds before you over the scent? *the older you get the bigger fool you get.*" "Now," said Mr. Cosser to me, as he related the anecdote, "I shouldn't have minded all this, had it not been that there were two gentlemen fifty yards before me, down the road, at the time." Doubtless this somewhat alters the case; but so good a sportsman, and so excellent a rider as Mr. Cosser is, should not have been seduced into so heinous a fault in a huntsman's eyes, as pressing upon hounds down a road, where the scent is always in danger of being lost.

Riding across wheat fields is thought more of in Scotland than it is in England, and this reminds me of a good anecdote of Williamson. Having killed his fox in a turnpike-road, he saw a farmer, who had been defeated by the pace, coming sailing away down a large field of growing wheat. "Ware wheat," roared Williamson, "what the devil do you mean, man, by riding over the wheat?"

Farmer. "Why I was thinking——"

Williamson. "Thinking! what's the use of thinking? *you* should reflact."

Farmer. "But the wheat is my own."

Williamson. "So much the worse; *there's the force of example*.*'

Now there is no longer a doubt but that Williamson can blow up; but that gem must be rich indeed which can afford to be set without a foil. For my own part, however, were I not Nimrod, I would any day stand a rating from him, for the sake of the peculiarly forcible language in which I know it would be conveyed to me. And suppose I give rather a convincing proof of this power of words, the result of a nervous tone, in the pronunciation of them, which never fails to have effect, particularly in the art of persuading or advising. In his journey to London, in the mail-coach, he obtained sufficient influence over one of his fellow-passengers, a person in a large way of business, to take into his employ a young man upon his sole recommendation, and this to a situation in which much confidence was required. I question whether Demosthenes himself could have done so much by any wary Greek, as Williamson did by his brother Scot, and had he—as against another Æschines—been pitted against him in the coach, I should have backed the copious simplicity of the huntsman even against the majestic address of the orator. In power of voice he would not have had a chance with him.

But have I nothing more to say of my hero during his visit to London? Yes—one little anecdote. "Williamson," said the duke, "you should see some of the lions of London, the two parks, &c. &c." "Wall, your grace," replied Williamson, "I should greatly like to do so; but *I don't know the country and shall be lost.*" The duke immediately ordered one of his own hacks to be saddled for him, and away sallied

* The Aquilian law—the reparation of wrongs—is in force here; and a bill for damage is now and then brought in.

forth the huntsman, with the duke's pad groom behind him, commanding the respect and admiration of all whom he met. Now Williamson needs not the aid of borrowed plumes; but there cannot be a doubt that in these days of creation, he was mistaken by many for a newly-made, lord—for one of old Wetherall's " pitchforked lot," upon a late memorable occasion.

I have hitherto only been speaking of Williamson as a servant to a noble duke, as a huntsman to a pack of fox-hounds, as a horseman, and as a sportsman, but must now place him before my readers in a very different light—as a man of education and of reading, an elder of the Scottish kirk, and a Laird of the parish of St. Boswell's, where I am told he possesses a very pretty estate. In the two latter relations I have nothing further to say of him than to express my sincere wish that he may long continue an elder of the Scottish kirk, and a laird of the parish of St. Boswell's; and I shall quickly dispatch him in the first-named position—as a man of education and of reading. I shall deal with him as Homer deals with Helen—show him off, in fact, by one single stroke. A matter of history being one day discussed by the cover's side, without any of the field being able to determine it, a reference was made to Williamson, who instantly decided the point. Clarendon says of some one, that " his education had been good amongst books and men;" Williamson, it appears, has partaken of the fruits of the former, if he have not profited by the latter; but a slender education tells on a strength of intellect like his.

I must now, however, take leave of the sayings and doings of this extraordinary man until we meet again in the hunting-field, and I hope he will forgive the length of my notice of him. But I have an apology

at hand. By the general voice of the sporting world he holds a pre-eminent place in the rank of huntsmen; as a faithful servant he is by none excelled; and he will leave behind him the example to other servants of a spotless name. The wisdom of the philosopher then, as well as the morality of the divine, must be contented with this, and I shall stand acquitted of bestowing upon him unmerited praise. For my own part I covet the feelings of such a man. The first of human blessings is to be virtuous, the second to be praised; and he who enjoys both these distinctions—no matter his station—is arrived at the summit of all earthly felicity:

"The first, the greatest bliss on man conferr'd,
Is in the acts of virtue to excel;
The second, to obtain their high reward,
The soul-exalting praise of doing well.
Who both these lots attains is bless'd indeed,
Since fortune here below can give no richer meed."

I am compelled to follow where my subject leads me, and from huntsman to whipper-in is the next step. Of these indispensable coadjutors in a kennel, of course the Duke of Buccleuch has his quantum—and this quantum is two. The first, Hugh Burn, is, in my opinion, a most efficient man in the field; an excellent horseman; and, out of the field, a well-conducted respectable servant. But I cannot stop here. "The very devil is in these Scotch servants," said I to myself, after half an hour's conversation with this young man in the Dalkeith stables, "they all talk like philosophers." However, to be serious, this said whipper-in discoursed with me on various subjects, one of them a fine run on the preceding day, in language, the structure of which would have done for Professor Wilson in his chair. How different, thought I within myself,

was this man's account of the various incidents of the day he was speaking of to that given some twenty years ago by one of his craft in England, when informing his fellow-servants of an accident that befel the daughter of his noble master in the field. It appeared that the young lady's mare, called Arachne, had stumbled with her in her gallop, and, unable to recover herself, came head over heels with her to the ground. The whipper-in's version of her ladyship's mishap was verbatim this: "Tum," said she; "My lady," says Oi; "Why, what dun you think, Tum? The Rackne mare put her foot in a hole and come —— over tip, by G—."

Both the whippers-in—the second is young, and so exempt from criticism—are of Williamson's own making, I do not mean the issue of his loins, but instructed in their calling by himself. And his notions on this subject are certainly worthy of record. "There's no two things," said he one day to Sir David Baird, "so difficult to make perfect as a whipper-in and a terrier, at least I find it so. The greatest perseverance and *patience* are necessary to make them know their business." "They come to the wrong shop for *one* of those articles when they come to your's," said the Baronet. But a joke often passes between these two noted sportsmen—allowable, it will be admitted, when it is recollected that the one was the favoured servant of the revered father of the other.

Surely it is now high time that the Mi-nis-ter's mare and Nimrod should be on their road to Kelso; and, after one of the most unpleasant rides I ever had in my life, for the night was as dark as the minister's mare was black, and the ice was in places just as smooth as her well-

worn shoes, I arrived there to a second dinner, at a little after seven. Sufficient for the day, then, is the evil thereof; and, as Milton says,

"*To-morrow* to fresh fields and pastures new."

Monday 24th. From the strength of the ice so early on the preceding evening, I had serious misgivings as to the probability of hunting on the morrow, and they were verified to the full extent. The fixture for this day was Kelso-bridge, but that unwelcome visitor in November, a hard, black frost, rendered it of no avail. At Kelso, and still more so, at St. Boswell's, the surface of the ground was as hard as it often is at the end of a third day's frost, yet strange to say, at Dunse it had so much the appearance of a hunting day,—"allowing a little for the morning," as fox-hunters say—that Lords Elcho, Saltoun, and Archibald Seymour, and Mr. M'Dougal Grant, made their appearance in the hunt room, about an hour after I had breakfasted, to the inexpressible satisfaction of Peter, who had given them up in despair. "Now Seymour, where are your fifty pounds for Nimrod?" I could hear one of them say, as they were coming up stairs; and hereon hangs a tale perhaps not unworthy of relating. His lordship has a black mare, nearly, if not quite, thorough-bred, very fast, very stout, and also a large fencer, naturally. But she has a fault for which she is indebted to nature. She has what is called a joint in her neck; in fact, she is what is termed ewe or stag-necked, as many well-bred ones are, and consequently she is very difficult to handle at her fences, and uncertain at them. "Why don't you put a martingal on that mare, my lord?" said I to him one day, seeing the failing she had. "Oh," replied his lordship, "a martingal *looks* so low." "Never mind the look," resumed I, "*you will go faster* with it, than without it; and you will ride your mare with safety, which

you have not done heretofore." Lord Archibald took my advice and was so pleased with the effect of it, that he declared he would not take fifty pounds for the advice Nimrod had given him. But it is all nonsense talking about horses not being able to cross a country in martingals. Who rode straighter than Will Barrow, the late Mr. Corbet's huntsman? Who rode over larger fences? Who got fewer falls? and who ever saw him *without* a long martingal on his snaffle rein? Indeed, on the very day on which I had offered this advice, Lord Elcho was riding a horse in a martingal, and which horse I heard he afterwards sold to Lord Eglinton, at a good price.

About twelve o'clock, Williamson arrived from the kennel with the fatal news that no hounds were to be at the bridge; indeed he had been obliged to wait for a rough-shod horse to bring him to the town of Kelso. What then was to be done? A lounge through Mr. Dickinson's stables was the first step taken by way of killing time, and then a walk to the bridge, to hear the news of the river. But from whom were we to hear it?—not from one of the fifteen salmon we saw basking in its bed, but from the keeper of the toll-bar on the bridge, who had formerly kept a fishing hut on its banks, to which some of the celebrated gentlemen-fishermen resorted. "Who killed the most salmon in one day last season?" (it was now fence time) was the question I put to him. "One squire Musters from England," replied the toll-keeper; "he killed nine clean fish." But I have reason to believe there are few better fishermen than Mr. Musters; and I can produce one fact in corroboration of this assertion which I had from the lips of a friend of his and mine, with whom I spent a day last summer in Calais. "Last year," said he, "I got permission for Musters to fish in some preserved water, near Uxbridge, and where there was one trout of six pounds, in a certain hole,

but so shy, that the keepers could not take him. Musters took him the third throw!"

Setting aside personal regard, I rejoice to hear anything of Mr. Musters—that paragon of British sportsmen. The last time I saw him he told me he should never hunt hounds again, but I said I was hard of belief on that subject. He is at work once more I find in his own country,—Nottinghamshire,—and such is the care that he has taken of himself—as another master of hounds said—chiefly for the sake of fox-hunting, that I was informed, on very good authority, that, one day last season he planted every man in the field at an awkward place under a tree. I read something in the papers at the commencement of the present season, of his son showing him the way at a rasper. It might have been so; the young ones ought to break the binders for the old ones; but I will answer for it that, on this day, the old one was "there or thereabouts" at the finish of the run spoken of. Mr. Musters, during his visit to Colonel Fotheringham in Forfarshire, was once out with Mr. Dalyell's hounds, which was the extent of his fox-hunting in Scotland. Pardon this digression.

There were three renowned personages whose absence from Kelso, and its neighbourhood, I very much regretted. These were, Lord John Scott, brother to the Duke of Buccleuch, Mr. Musters, and Mrs. Brown, whose portrait adorns your number for May last. I had the honour of being introduced to Lord John, by Captain Ross, in London, but I never saw his lordship either before or since, to my knowledge. Independently of his fine horsemanship, the high character he bears in Roxburghshire as an open-hearted, unaffected young man, which it appears has fixed him so firmly in the kindly affections of all descriptions of per-

sons, rendered me very desirous of making his acquaintance previously to my quitting Scotland; and I was flattered into a belief that such would be the case, as his return from the Mediterranean was every day expected. Mr. Musters had visited Kelso, not for the purpose of hunting but of fishing, so had no inducement to remain long after hunting commenced. Being by the side of the Tweed however, one day, as Williamson was finding his fox, he was fortunate enough to view him away, and of course "gave the office." "Who is that holloaing away the fox?" inquired the Duke; "*it is a sportsman I am sure.*" It was Musters; to whom his Grace immediately made an offer of a mount so long as he remained in Scotland, but which that celebrated sportsman declined, having no hunting clothes at command.

It may readily be imagined that I was not a little in the dumps at this apparent prospect of a serious stop to hunting, and that the sight of fifteen salmon, out of season, or even the Arcadian scenery of the Tweed, was a poor substitute for the Duke of Buccleuch's fox-hounds, and a good day's sport. Moreover, Williamson had brought me the most agreeable intelligence that his Grace had ordered a horse to be at cover for me so long as I remained at Kelso. The day, however, despite of frost and fog, was not, as Thompson says, "delightless," for at this period of it a trifling circumstance occurred that gave me great pleasure, inasmuch as it left its moral. This was the manner in which Lord Elcho addressed the toll-bar keeper and his wife, for old acquaintance sake, and no doubt in recollection of the sport he had had in company with the former, amongst the finny tribe. To make my story short—he shook them both heartily by their hands, and right-well pleased did they show themselves with the compliment paid them. But the moral! Why simply this;—That no difference in rank and station allows a thoroughly kind-hearted

man to stifle feelings nature has gifted him with, and that they will burst forth when she calls. Nor is this all. There must have been a heart-felt consciousness in the old couple that their good conduct could alone have entitled them to this publicly-bestowed honour. No wonder then that—as I have already said he is—Lord Elcho is popular. Pride and ill-nature will be hated in spite of all the wealth and all the greatness this world can bestow; but civility is always safe. Even the double diadem of Demetrius could not command regard.

In an hour from this time, the Dunse party mounted the double-bodied phaeton that had brought them to Kelso; Mr. Fletcher Campbell remounted his hack; and, like the Doctor in the fable, the redoubted Peter

> "Took his leave with signs of sorrow,
> Despairing of his fee to-morrow."

And what was left for me? Nothing but Noctes Ambrosianæ in Blackwood's Magazine—a great treat I admit, and a substitute for most things, *save fox-hunting*—until a walk into the country was proposed by Mr. Callander, the ladies following us in his carriage, to inspect the house of a gentleman* in the neighbourhood, conspicuous for his classical taste in books, pictures, and statues.

Tuesday, 25th. The frost disappeared as suddenly as it came, and the duke's hounds met this day at a place called Rutherford, distant from Kelso about four miles; but I have very little to say of sport. The ground was hard and slippery, the country bad, and the fox worse than

* Mr. Waldie, then absent at Bath.

all, for although he was found in, and broke from, a large wood, he suffered himself to be coursed in view by the pack, and died after a short run of somewhere about three miles. There was, in fact, but one redeeming clause in the operations of this day, which was the peculiarity of the spot on which the who-whoop took place—in a deeply sequestered and finely timbered glen, through which the Tweed meanders with more than its usual habits, also nearly opposite to the famous Abbey of Dryburgh, and from whence the venerable beauty of its ruin is exhibited to great advantage. To Scotchmen, this abbey is rendered interesting from sundry historical recollections; to all men by the fact that the remains of a man who—

"velut inter ignes luna minores"—

delighted the world by his literary talents, and astounded it by his literary labours, are interred within its walls. It is hardly necessary to add to whom I allude—*to the immortal author of Marmion;* and when listening to the baying of the hounds previously to their breaking up their fox, which resounded magnificently through the glades and windings of this deep ravine, I doubted not but that within its sepulchral walls—where echo, it is said, delights to dwell—it might also have been repeated to the listening ear. Knowing then, as I did know, that this departed poet was a sportsman and had so often made such scenes as this his theme, I could not but lament that that ear was deaf to the soul-enchanting sound. But I believe I am wrong here. The sepulchre of the poet is no longer the residence of Echo. It has been elegantly said, that, on the death of Bion, the disconsolate nymph roved among the rocks, listening, as it were, to catch the last murmuring of his notes; but listening in vain she became melancholy and mute.

Not far from this ancient monastery, and within our sight this day, was a still more splendid structure which superstition reared in the dark ages of this country—the far-famed Abbey of Melrose, which I ought to feel ashamed of myself for not having gone purposely to inspect. But what said the poet of whom I have just been speaking?

> "If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
> Go visit it by the pale moonlight."

Now there was no moon during the week I was at Kelso; neither if there had, could I have spared a day or rather a night for that purpose; nor indeed by his own admission, had Sir Walter himself ever seen it by that light, when he at the time strongly recommended it to others. But this goes for nothing. Although a story may be fabulous the moral may be just, nor is truth weakened by the ornamental language in which it is conveyed to us. But I will borrow words more expressively elegant than my own. "The shaft of the stately column," says a writer in an Edinburgh Review*, "is not weakened by the Acanthus which curls at its summit, nor is reason less enlightened when it derives a ray from the imagination." The Douglas of "Chevy Chace" lies interred in this abbey.

From the circumstance of its being what may be called a second hand fixture, in addition to the unfavourable state of the country from the remains of the frost, and Lord Elcho's and the Galewood hounds also being out, we had a very small field, which rendered the disappointment the less; and to myself it was none at all. I rode a horse King had sent me from Edinburgh in lieu of one I had returned to him, and which appeared never to have seen hounds before One solitary incident, then, is all I have more to relate of this inauspicious day. When within half

* January, 1835. Article, "British Scientific Association."

a mile of the cover, Williamson turned out of the road into the fields parallel to it, for the purpose of avoiding thorns with which it was strewed, to the great annoyance of the hounds, as they found their way into their feet. Perceiving Frank Collison, who was in the rear of them, on a fine long-tailed horse, which threw up his heels and squealed after he leaped a fence, I observed to Mr. Callander—"What a slapping four-year-old colt old Frank has got under him this morning!" Now what did this four-year-old colt prove to be, but old Alphabet, *in his nineteenth year!* I was sorry, however, to learn before I quitted Scotland, that there were symptoms of the old horse failing—at all events doubts were entertained whether he would carry the duke another season, and for this reason:—towards the end of a severe day, he, for the first time in his life—at least he was never given to do so—took to refusing his fences, which in old hunters is an almost unerring sign of "cutting it" altogether. However, go when he may, he owes his noble master nothing, as he must have given him many a delightful ride.

Wednesday 26th. Met the duke's hounds at Kelso-bridge, and trotted away to Lempitlan, and found in a very strong whin cover. Here I had an opportunity of seeing this celebrated pack give the lie to the assertion that they are shy of facing thick gorse. Our fox on this day indeed appeared resolved to put them to the proof, for he never broke at all, but died at the end of an hour, during which time almost every hound was at work. I appeal to all who were present if they could expect or desire to see this species of fox-hunting better or more effectually performed; nor was there a finer or stronger fox than the hunted one ever seen; and his never attempting to break, showed the strength of the cover.

I had one of the duke's own horses brought to cover for me this day—a fine brown gelding called Don Juan, by Childe Harold, purchased, as Matthew told me, from Colonel Douglas, one of the duke's guardians, during his Grace's minority. I had the pleasure of knowing the colonel, during the seasons he hunted in Oxfordshire, where we esteemed him—and I believe he is very generally esteemed—a superior judge of a hunter. There are some beautiful points in Don Juan—such as length of shoulder and frame, so highly essential in a hunter.

Our next draw was a noted cover called Haddon Riggs, which produced a fox that stood an hour and forty minutes and beat us by getting into a village. The country was good—enclosed throughout, in part strongly—and we had every description of chase to show off the working of hounds. In short it was what is called a fine hunting run, wanting nothing but the finish; and at times—the first burst in particular—fast enough for any man, considering the severity of the country. The first check—at crossing a road—was likewise happily got rid of by Williamson; and from end to end the run was ridden to, by the few horsemen who were out, in a straightforward and sportsmanlike manner. There was nothing like jealousy, no pressing upon hounds, but every man's object appeared to be the same—to see, and not to mar sport. The two Mr. Baillies, Mr. Henry Scott, of Harden, a relation of the duke's, and Captain Spottiswoode were, as usual, where they ought to have been. The duke himself was not out. In the first place the fixture was a long distance from Bow-wood, where he was at that time residing; and, secondly, his Grace sacrifices his pleasures to the multifarious duties of his station to a degree that perhaps might scarcely be credited in a person at his age, and also so fond of hounds. In fact, no man works harder

than the Duke of Buccleuch ; but it appears Horace was right when he said

—— " Nil sine magno
Vita labore dedit mortalibus."

Two circumstances in the course of this run call for a remark—one relating to the hounds, the other to their huntsman, and to which I have already slightly alluded. Towards the end of this fine run, it was my good fortune to get along side the pack, for about a mile, in a narrow valley, when they went their very best pace, with a breast-high scent over fine old grass. But they did not carry a head; on the contrary, they tailed, as the term is, to a more than usual degree. My only remark to Williamson when we neared each other in the chase was—" Did you see those young Merlin hounds at head?" to which he nodded assent; but at a subsequent meeting in the field the following conversation took place between us:—

Nimrod. Your hounds did a good day's work on Wednesday, with that brace of foxes.

Williamson. They surely did. They worked very hard in the first whin, and it was very hot for them all that time in cover.

Nimrod. It told upon them; for they were somewhat blown where the scent was so good over the grass, in the valley.

Williamson. Wall, do you know, sir, (emphatically) *I was thinking* you would be of that opinion; but I will tell you what it was. You noticed those young Merlin hounds out of Countess and Lucy, at head. Wall—depend upon it, *the old hounds rather mistrusted them.*"

Now my real motive for discussing this subject with Williamson was, a desire to hear from his own lips, and in his peculiar manner, what excuse he would offer for an apparent deficiency of either wind or power, and my readers will agree with me, that a better concocted one, at a pinch, could not have been produced by a huntsman. But who can blame a man for being jealous of the reputation of a system he has laboured to bring to perfection; and if I were to enumerate all the apologies for hounds that my recollection would furnish me with—for foxes "lost or mislaid,"—they would form a long catalogue. Some of them, too, would amuse: as for example. "Who-whoop," holloaed one of our oldest, best, and cheeriest English gentlemen-huntsmen now going—as his hounds threw up at the end of a brilliant burst, succeeded by an unsuccessful cast. "*He's gone to ground;* Jezabel, good bitch, has marked him in. (Blowing his horn.) Get them away, Jack, we can't bolt him, for the drain runs across the high road." Unfortunately, however, a yokel comes up to this best of all gentlemen-huntsmen with the following pithy information—which he himself knew as well as the yokel did. "I say—maester; there's no fox in yon drain, for I sees the cobwebs right in the mouth on't!"

But believe me, Mr. Williamson, there is to animal, if not to mechanical, power a limit which cannot be exceeded, how much-so-ever it may be encreased by judicious assistance from man. The Duke of Buccleuch's hounds,—or those of any other man—form not an exception to this rule. That hour's work in the whin cover, added to another hour over a deep, and, in great part, ploughed country, some of which carried, as the term is, told upon them, as it would tell on all others; and towards the end of forty minutes more, it is not to be wondered at that young hounds—which perhaps had not been so active in the whin—should be

at the head, and some of the old ones at the tail, and particularly so at the pace the pack was at this time going. Shortly after this the day told upon the horses, and the walls and ditches looked high and wide even to the best of them; but I saw no falls, and but few were absent at the finish.

I have previously alluded to two clever casts I saw made by Williamson, one of which,—"the cast *forward*,"—occurred towards the end of this chase. After running very hard over low, deep, and rich land, the hounds got upon that which was higher and lighter, which brought them to check in some plantations, a short distance from a gentleman's house which was below them*. Not hitting off the scent, after the second fling for it, Williamson put his horn to his mouth, and galloped down to the house, at which he knew there was a drain occasionally used by foxes. He was right; our fox had tried it, and gone on.

I have already mentioned the finish to this run. Our fox—evidently one of the right sort—gained the large village of Yetholm, the renowned colony of gypsies, and there found his safety. And yet one would imagine Yetholm to be about the last place for any living animal—eatable, or non-eatable—to find itself secure in; but it appears that the gypsies here are but little distinguished by peculiarity of character or habits from their fellow-townsmen, although they do not intermarry with them. There is a fine lake near this place called Primside lake, which Mr. George Baillie told me abounded with pike of great size; and amongst its other curiosities, the church of Yetholm is covered with thatch—reminding one of the primitive simplicity of its first days.

* Called The Cherry Trees.

It is somewhat remarkable that every pack of hounds in this part of Scotland had sport on this said Wednesday, November 26th. The duke's run was an hour and forty minutes; Major St. Paul had an hour and forty-five minutes, which cost Lord Frederick Fitzclarence a horse; and Lord Elcho an hour and thirty-five minutes, losing his fox, as we lost ours, in a village, at dark. Now does any gentleman-sportsman or philosopher—in this part of Scotland—keep a meteorological journal? If so, let me request him to turn to it and give us the result of his this day's observations. It appears to have been a hunting day; for although our scent was at times flashy, I attributed that circumstance more to the country than to the day, and as it was, it was good enough to have killed the best fox that ever wore a brush—I mean by fair hunting, with pace enough to satisfy most men.

Thursday, November 27th. Mr. Callander and myself were on our backs just as the day was dawning, having sixteen miles to ride to what I must call a nominal breakfast at Mr. Sprot's, of Riddle, for Peter had taken care to break our fast with a profusion of good things before we started—Still what matters it how often men eat who hunt five times in one week and ride sixteen miles to cover? But to proceed. Critics have decided that a description of *sun-set* is stale and trite, and can no longer be endured,—although they are obliged to admit, that it is then that nature looks so lovely, and that it is then that her language is so deep and devotional—therefore I must be cautious what I say of *sun rise*. But all the Longinusses that were ever created cannot make us insensible to the impressions of nature, and were I to live a century longer, I should not forget old Phœbus's appearance on this morning, nor how, after gilding the tops of the mountains above us, he broke through the mist that hung upon the Tweed, and showed us his face in

the water, as if in the mirror of day. But previously to his appearance, I observed to Mr. Callander, that the view of Kelso and its beautiful environs could not possibly look to more advantage than they did by the extraordinarily grey twilight of this fine morning, which, as "Venus is the promise of the sun," was the harbinger of a beautiful day.

About ten o'clock we were at our second breakfast at this venerable old mansion—one of the oldest, I was told, in this part of Scotland, and indeed such did its appearance indicate—where we found several sportsmen were assembled, and in half an hour afterwards the hounds arrived, accompanied by their noble owner. A horse called Bishop was also brought from the kennel for myself, and we immediately proceeded to business, accompanied by the lady of the house, who rode elegantly and well, upon a thoroughly broke horse, but only as an amateur, at a distance.

Being splendidly mounted—on one of the duke's own horses again, and I believe the best fencer in his stables*, I was sorely disappointed at the unfavourable result of this promising day; for old Phœbus had disappeared, and it had every sign of a hunting one. The hounds divided on two scents at starting, and although we run one fox to ground at double quick time, there was too much of the "short and sweet" about the thing to be satisfactory, unless it were to the horses. We had a sharp burst with another fox, which also went to ground; but this was not *comme il faut;* for although the leading hounds could run hard, the body of

* When riding this horse on another occasion, a farmer thus addressed me:—"You are riding the highest leaper in all Scotland. To see the walls Mr. Ogilvie (his former owner) used to ride that horse over, *would have terrified any common mind.*"

the pack could not at times run up, for the want of a holding scent. All this must have been very annoying to the duke, it being the first and only day's hunting he allowed himself in that week; and he was mounted on Jemmy, of whom I have spoken as a particularly clever thoroughbred horse, and all over a hunter. Frank Collison was on old Alphabet again, looking ready for business, and I intended having an eye to him, in consideration of former experience of him in the field.

Our hacks being at St. Boswell's—where Mr. Callander's horse lay the preceding night—we returned home with the hounds; saw them put into their kennels; sat half an hour with Williamson, talking over the occurrences of the day; and after refreshing ourselves with a glass of his "Who the devil sent you this?" mounted our hacks, and after a pitch-dark ride, got to Kelso to our dinner about seven. We lived in clover, for independently of the good things provided by Peter, or at least by his master, we had a succession of game and fruit from Preston-hall, the fine seat of Mr. Callander, whose gardens are, I believe, not to be excelled in Scotland. The use of the hunt room also, affording a retiring room for the ladies in the apartments occupied by the party previously to my joining them, rendered the *tout en semble* so complete, that we might have almost made ourselves believe we were actually living at Preston-hall, instead of at this very excellent inn.

Neither were our evenings wanting in the accomplishments of domestic life. When we joined the ladies in their drawing-room, after a temperate enjoyment of the bottle, we found Mrs. Callander, with her guitar in her hand, ready to accompany her voice in song, and, after the ruder pleasures of the day, to lull us with "sounds of sweetest melody." Nor is there any poetical exaggeration here. Had Mrs.

Callander's lot been differently cast, she might have ranked high amongst professional singers, as strength and sweetness are combined in her song, and, when in its plaintive strain, I really cannot name her equal. Now having said this, how can I bring myself to relate the following fact, or, in other words, to expose the weakness of my nature? I was asked to sing, I said I could not sing. But I was told I could sing—in fact I was at last told that I *must* sing.

Now what says Mr. Congreve in his Mourning Bride?

> " Music has charms to soothe the savage breast;
> To soften rocks and bend the knotted oak;"

And had the poet added, " to make a man make a fool of himself," the highly-wrought picture would have been complete. " Then," said I, " I *will* sing," and, perhaps emboldened by the best part of a bottle of *La fitte*, murdered the beautiful air of

> " Majestic rose the god of day
> In yon bright burnish'd sky,"

in very great style. But what can resist the solicitations of the ladies? Neither the wisdom of Solomon, nor the piety of David, were proof against it, and how could Nimrod's philosophy be expected to be so?

But human folly and human presumption seldom pass scot-free—never, I believe, by those who have themselves been guilty of them; and I shall not soon forget my next morning's recollection of having so presumptuously presented myself after a well-graced actor. It flitted across my mind as my eyes opened, and a dose of Dover powders would have been powerless in producing the sudorific effect that it almost instantaneously occasioned. I consoled myself, however, with the reflection

that life is but a joke, and that the very wisest of us all are but pursuing bubbles which break in their flight.

By an arrangement recently made* between the owners of them, hounds are to be reached every day in the week, from either Dunse or Kelso; and on Friday, November 28th, Major St. Paul met at Cornhill inn, within a mile of Coldstream, a place of which I have already spoken; just ten miles from Kelso, and a very pretty ride, almost all by Tweed side. On my arrival there with Mr. Callander, I saw symptoms of a large attendance of sportsmen, which indicated a good opinion of the fixture. The stables were full of hunters which had arrived on the previous evening from Dunse, and other places; and calls for "breakfast" resounded throughout the inn, for those who had arrived from afar. In fact there was note of preparation, not for war, but for business.

A little after ten o'clock, Major St. Paul arrived with his hounds, which looked in very excellent condition. The same might have been said of a very Englishman-like looking person who accompanied him, in a drab great coat, buttoned up to his chin, but not an inch of the "pink" to be seen, even at the skirts. "How are you?" said St. Paul to me; "How are *you*?" said I. "How are you?" said the other; "How are *you*?" said I,—with a familiar nod of my head, in answer to a familiar nod of his head. Now, until he peeled to the pink, I was quite unconscious of whom I was addressing—that it was Lord Frederick Fitzclarence, one of my King's sons; so, yielding to no man in loyalty, I thought it my duty to ride up to his lordship and explain. But those

* The Duke of Buccleuch engaged to meet every Tuesday, and Major St. Paul every Friday, within reach of Dunse and Kelso.

who know him, will say, I might have saved myself the trouble, for there is not an ounce of starch about Lord Frederick Fitzclarence, who set down my familiarity to its true account—the non-recollection of his person, muffled up as it was.

We drew over a great deal of country, and some fine whin covers, with only a very slight touch of a drag, and I began to think we were in for a blank day, when Lord Frederick got tidings that some main earths were not stopped, through a mistake in the stoppers, and we consequently trotted away to Learmouth Bog. This was in every sense of the word an agreeable move, for the weather was wild and boisterous on the higher ground, and we had now descended into a milder region, as well as a more hunting-like country, and a brilliant day's sport was the happy result.

It has not been my lot to see a great many foxes foung on bogs; but of this I am certain—that when the surrounding ground commands a view of the proceedings, a bog is the place of all others to see "a find" to advantage. In the first place, every hound is at once present to the eye when drawing, there being nothing to cover them; and the sight of the whole pack—perhaps jumping from tussuck to tussuck, in the hope of pouncing upon the villain, is no small treat. Then see them feathering on the scent before he is found—as we did this day—how beautiful they look, clustering together, as it were to assist each other! But the find! to see him jump up in view—as we also did this day—and *break that view in the second field*, by his speed and his cunning,—by heavens it is the very perfection of the thing at starting. Fox, hounds, and horsemen, all get away at once, and as the saying is, "it is the devil take the hindmost."

It was my ill-luck, this day, to be mounted on, I think, the worst horse I ever bestrode in my life under the denomination of a hunter. He was one of what we jocosely called "the royal stud,"—that is one of Mr. King's, and had been handed over to me by M'Dowal Grant, who had found him worthless, and yet the brute had something the appearance of a hunter. But this is a digression; I must give an account of the run.

No fox ever found by hounds went more gallantly away than this did, and almost every man in the field got a fair start. But a fair start and a good one are two very different things, a fact clearly shown this day by Lord Elcho, who benefiting by his Leicestershire education, was away with the leading hounds, and by the time they had crossed a road, his lordship was comfortably landed by their side. And how long did he remain there? Why for exactly forty minutes, at the end of which the fox was killed, having travelled eleven miles point blank in that short space without one single check—over as fine a country too—barring one circumstance—as a man could desire to ride over; and as Lord Elcho himself declared, having shown as straight-forward and brilliant a run—if not the most straight-forward and brilliant—he had ever seen in any country, Leicestershire always excepted. But I will describe this country. It was more than half under grass. The ploughed land and the stubles rode light; the fields were of good size, and the fences not large, and most of them such as could be taken nearly in stroke. And who else saw it? Why as far as I was able to judge of it, I can compare it to nothing better than a race, in which Lord Elcho was first; Mr. Mc Kenzie Grieve, second; Lord Eglinton, third; and Mr. Fletcher of Saltoun, fourth. These were distinguishable by the colours of their horses—the three first having been chestnuts, and Mr. Fletcher's white—

all the rest, as O'Kelly said, " no where," and Mr. Fletcher got a little wide of the line, as I was told, towards the finish. Lord Frederick Fitzclarence was at the very further extremity of the bog when the fox broke, and although he made desperate efforts to get up, and passed me at an awful pace, I despaired of his getting in front, unless a check occurred, for two sufficient reasons. First—his weight—good sixteen stone I should say; secondly, there was no chance for a nick, as the line was nearly straight.

There was but one drawback to this splendid run, besides the fact of its being too fast for the general enjoyment of the field, for it is but few who can enjoy a run at such a pace as this—*eleven miles in just forty minutes*! But the draw-back! Why the last view I had of the hounds was, as they were ascending a steep bank, on which I was able to distinguish the three chestnuts and the grey. There must be a ravine, thought I within myself; how shall I get across that, for my horse is dead blown at present? We had then been going about twenty minutes. " A river," exclaimed one of the field, who had dropped astern like myself. And he might have said more than this. We were on classic ground, and he might have sung with the poet—

" Meandering Till's impetuous flow
Runs wildly in the vale below."

It was the Till, if not the most rapid, the most treacherous river in all Scotland—I believe I may also say in England, as we were at this time in England—and in which Mr. Sitwell of Barmoor-castle, (author of the Letters of Nim North,) so nearly lost his life. However, as the hounds crossed it, of course the most of the field crossed it, and without any disaster. But my attempt was an unfortunate one, by coming down

upon it in a treacherous place, which, with a horse dead blown, was very far from a joke. I had not proceeded many yards, about belly-deep, and with a very strong current, before my horse dropped over head and ears into a hole, but quickly struggled out of it. He then fell on his head over a huge stone, but we did not part company. In another ten yards, over head and ears he went again, but still we stuck to each other, "like a lover to his bride," as Saddell says in his song, and at last reached the bank. Captain Grant of the Ninth Lancers, who was likewise on one of "the royal stud," a throughbred one too, but so blown, that, like my own, he could scarcely scramble over a gap, was close behind me at the time, but, supposing that I was gone salmon fishing, looked for a safer place and made his way across the stream.

But what situation was I in when I found myself on *terra firma?* By the time I had ascended the steep bank, and steep indeed it was, my horse could scarcely stand, although I led him up it in my hand. I espied a hard road in the direction the hounds had taken; I thought I might bring him round a bit upon that; but alas! I had left a fore-shoe in the Till, and the road was newly stoned. I then turned into the enclosures, and following as well as I could in their wake, in company with another unfortunate, got up to the hounds about ten minutes after they had worried their fox—say twenty from the time they had killed him.

The first person who addressed me was Lord Frederick Fitzclarence, who, like myself, had been in trouble, for his face was bleeding from a wound. "Go to him," (St. Paul,) said his lordship, "and make him happy, his hounds have behaved to admiration." The next was Lord Elcho. "I do not hesitate," said that fine sportsman,—and observe reader, they are words spoken by the master of a neighbouring pack, as

applying to the merits of another neighbouring pack—"to say, that barring two or three in Leicestershire, I have seen to-day the quickest and straightest thing from end to end, that I ever saw with hounds in my life." As to the gallant master of the pack, it was allowed by all, that there could be no such happy man as himself, that day, in Northumberland, neither do I suppose there was, for his hounds had given unbounded satisfaction to a field, and a field chiefly composed of sportsmen. I regret to say that Sir David Baird missed this fine run; he left us before we descended into the vale, having fixed to look at a horse at Kelso, and to return to Dunse that night. It would have just suited him, and no doubt he would have added one to the happy trio who saw it all.

We killed him at a place called Tiptoe, above Greaveslead, some miles above the celebrated Twizle-castle.

Lord Elcho this day rode a horse called Beppo, purchased of those celebrated dealers, Messrs. Elmores, and well known in the neighbourhood of London, as having distinguished himself in steeple-chases. He is exactly his lordship's sort of horse—well bred, not too big for the cramped fences of Berwickshire, and quite perfect in his work; but unfortunately he kicks hounds, therefore he cannot ride him with his own. If I had such a horse, I should be tempted to try an experiment with him. I should keep two or three black and white coloured curs with him in his box, with the hopes of his becoming reconciled to them in time; and if he killed a few of that description of vermin, society would be benefited by their riddance, for nine cases in ten of hydrophobia have their origin in half-starved curs. Lord Eglinton rode a large thoroughbred horse, whose name I cannot remember, but a truly Leicestershire-

like hunter; Mr. M'Kenzie Grieve was on the flower of his flock, but the name has likewise escaped me.

The day's alloy was now at hand -namely, *the ride home*, nearly twenty miles, with a horse in a doubtful state. He carried me, however, tolerably well when in company with the party who were making their way for Cornhill, where their hacks were awaiting their arrival; but after having stopped at a blacksmith's shop, at the end of about four miles, my situation was by no means an enviable one. Losing the excitement of good company, my nag began to exhibit awful symptoms of being tired when I got him under weigh again, and one which I had never experienced before. This was, "his forming up," a-la-dragoon, to every coal-cart horse he overtook on the road, and scraping acquaintance with him, by a neigh. However, by easing him of my weight for the greater part of the distance, and coaxing him along over the remainder, I got him to Cornhill, with the intention of leaving him there for the night; but as there was not a hack to be procured, a pint of sherry and an hour's rest, enabled him to carry me to Kelso.

The party from Dunse had not left Cornhill when I arrived there on my tired horse, having been detained by two separate causes—first, to refresh themselves after the fatigues of the day, for independently of the run, the morning had been rude and tempestuous; and secondly, they were under alarm for the safety of Mr. Charles Lamb, who by his not having made his appearence either at the finish, or at Cornhill, where his hack was planted, it was feared might have been left in the Till; the alarm, however, was groundless; but how he disposed of his time, or where else he crossed the Tweed, I forgot, subsequently, to inquire.

I was this day invited to a large dinner party, at Dunse, given by Lord Saltoun and Mr. M'Dowal Grant; but great as was the temptation, I was unwilling to miss the next day's hunting with the duke, and a mount from his Grace's stud. Mr. Callander and myself then—for he was kind enough to wait the restoration of the bodily powers of my horse—set forward for Kelso just as the night was setting in. And here I have a word to say. I had formed an opinion that the lower orders of the Scottish people, by the beneficial effects of education, unknown to English boors, were humanized by such means far beyond their neighbours. It may be so; and we should not judge, generally, by individual cases; but Mr. Callander will back my assertion, that a more ruffianly set of fellows than the drivers of the one horse carts which we met that night on the road, never disgraced any civilized country. In fact, such was their recklessness of limb or life towards those persons they met, or passed, that it was next to miraculous that no accident occurred. As for ourselves, although by the fact of Mr. Callander being mounted on a white horse, our approach was sufficiently visible, it was only by creeping into ditches that we twice saved ourselves from being run down, when on the right side of a very wide road. Drunkenness might have been pleaded in excuse, it being market day, but of what avail is education if it correct not such evils as this, and in a country purely agricultural?

Having arrived in safety at Kelso, a change of scene presented itself. The Cross Keys inn looked as if it was illuminated, at least every room in the house appeared occupied, and, as we entered the gateway, the words "hip, hip, hip, Hoo-RAY," resounded in our ears from above, as the welcoming of a popular toast. "There is a jovial set somewhere," said I to my friend, "no doubt they are drinking 'Fox-hunting.'" The cheering sound, however, proceeded from a party com-

posed of about half a dozen gentlemen of landed property in Roxburghshire, and *two-hundred* of the yeomen of the country, with the Duke of Buccleuch at the head of them, who had just finished their dinners. But I was wrong about the toast—it was "the King," that called forth this ebullition of good feeling; yet, strange to say, the health of all "the kings of the earth," at popular meetings of this sort, would be drunk in silence, when compared with the toast of *fox-hunting*, and in about an hour afterwards, as we sate at our dinner, we heard the whole house ring with another of these boisterous overflowings of the soul, enough to shake it to its foundation. "Now they are drinking fox-hunting," said I; and, on Peter being dispatched to ascertain the fact, we found it was even so. "The gentlemen have been drinking the duke and his fox-hounds," was the result of Peter's mission. Then soon after this the Welkin rang again—for neither roof, nor wall, could confine the uproarious shouting of this jovial party at the moment. "What now, Peter?"—"Why," replied Peter, "Mr. Hay of Dunse-castle has been giving 'em a speech, and he said something just at the *fi-nish* of it that seemed to tickle a' the gentlemen vastly." Now here we have the orator, inasmuch as what the death of the fox is to the chase—the climax is to a speech,

> "Still rising to a climax, till the last
> Surpassing all is not to be surpass'd."

And no wonder that an old master of hounds, like Mr. Hay, should leave something good for the finish. But all climaxes won't bear the types, and perhaps this will not. It was, I believe, a happy allusion to some part of the dress of an Highland chief—a fair subject for a joke, and I must leave my readers to guess the use that was made of it.

Having learned from Peter that the duke and a few of his friends had

retired into a private room, Mr. Callander and myself joined them, and described the fine run we had had in the morning, with St. Paul, in the pleasure of which they participated, from regard to the owner of the hounds, and I was congratulated on my escape from the Till, which several of the party declared to be the most dangerous river in the country, from the numerous holes with which it abounds, in addition to the rapidity of the current. Mr. Sitwell, they said, was saved in it as by a miracle, by catching the end of the lash of a whipper-in's whip, just as his strength had ceased to enable him to struggle any longer against the stream.

I have already observed that few men work harder than the Duke of Buccleuch does, and here is one proof. Seeing his Grace booted and spurred, and with a whip in his hand, I asked him "how he was going home?" "On horseback," was the reply. Now the night was neither wet nor rough, but so dark that one gentleman, though perfectly sober, had a miraculous escape for his life by falling, horse and all, down a precipice close to the river Tweed, into which his horse went. On my asking his Grace afterwards, how he got to Bow-wood, full twenty miles, he answered, "Oh! very well; a neighbouring miller and myself travelled very comfortably together." Now this circumstance would not be worthy of mention here were it not for a comment upon it; and I think I know enough of human nature, at all events of the nature of that description of men whom the duke had this day honoured with his company at a convivial meeting at Kelso—to pronounce that had his Grace stepped *out* of his carriage and four, on his arrival, and *into* it at his departure, it would have stripped the honour he had conferred upon his countrymen of much of its value in their eyes. This sort of *cessio bonorum*, if I may be allowed a lawyer's phrase—this putting

himself personally on a par with the smallest farmer at the dinner, was, I will answer for it, not void of effect, although perhaps unintentional on the duke's part; and the riding "comfortably home with the miller," like Mr. Hay's fi-nish to his speech, was the climax.

It amused me to hear that the duke introduced into his speech, not only the great advantages farmers derive from fox-hunting, but as much as told them, that their corn and grass *would be all the better for being ridden over.* If his Grace's words were to be taken literally, perhaps they would not always be borne out by experience; but with reference to consequences they were strictly true.

The next morning, Saturday 29th, the punctuality of Peter was once more to be put to the test. Having again sixteen miles to go to cover, our first breakfast was to be upon the table exactly at seven o'clock; and at half past seven Mr. Callander and myself were on our hacks—Mr. C. on a trotter for which he had given two hundred guineas, and I suppose the fastest in Scotland, bred by Mr. Theobald, of Stockwell, and myself on one of King's "hunters," which was certainly an excellent hack—on our road to a second breakfast at Spottiswoode, sixteen miles from Kelso, a mansion-house not then quite completed, built on a domain manufactured out of a black turbary bog; and were any thing wanted to display the unrivalled energy of the British mind, the reclaiming, by draining, the planting, improving, and building a mansion upon this black bog would do the business.

After a good second breakfast at this hospitable mansion, the duke's hounds made their appearance, that place being the fixture for the day. Now it is not every man who is considered fit to be trusted on the back

of a duke's horse with hounds, but a still higher honour was conferred on me this day. A horse called Perseverance, the only horse in the stud the Duchess of Buccleuch ever rides with hounds, was brought to Spottiswoode for me, and a most perfect hunter did he appear to be. But I must make short work of this day's proceedings.

It has been well said—

> "Who from the morning's brightest ray
> Can promise what will be the day?"

and although a finer morning than this was never seen on the last Saturday in November, the rain began to pour down as soon as we proceeded to business; and although there was no lack of foxes, there were no hopes of sport. Add to this, Perseverance was clipped, and shivered with cold, as we stood, sheltering, under some fir-trees; and as the hounds were only running from one bog to another, there was no inducement to follow them. Fearing then I might injure this valuable horse, I galloped away to the village of Lauder, where my hack was stationed, and after a ride of nearly thirty miles in incessant and hard rain, arrived at Chester-hall, twelve miles from Edinburgh, in a condition that does not require to be described.

Chester-hall, in the parish of Oxenford, twelve miles from Edinburgh, is (or at least at this time it *was*, for he has purchased an estate in the neighbourhood, on which he was about to build himself a house) the residence of the Hon. William Keith, a captain in his majesty's navy, and the only brother of the Earl of Kintore. Here I found assembled what may be called a family party, and none the worse for that; for it is in society, as in love, the nearer the equality the closer the bonds, and

it is here, and perhaps only here, that people appear towards each other quite without dissimulation and disguise. In addition to my host and hostess, then, there was Mr. Bannerman—brother to Sir Alexander, and maternal uncle to my host—a great and scientific agriculturist, and, I have reason to believe, more than usually skilled in the knowledge of our various grasses; also Mr. Adam Hay of Duddingston-house, near Edinburgh, a partner in Sir William Forbes's bank, and whose lady, who accompanied him, is sister to Mrs. Keith. Here then was a contrast to the rude scenes of the morning—to the "pelting of the pitiless storm," to which I was exposed for full six hours and more. An excellent dinner—every thing *comme il faut;* the presence of two of the most splendid women Scotland can produce—second Lady Cunliffes in my eyes; the society of two sportsmen and a farmer; and under the roof of the brother of my friend who invited me to this hospitable land! There was but one alloy—the pleasure was short-lived. Mr. Bannerman proceeded on the morrow on his journey towards Leamington, in Warwickshire: Mr. Hay left on the Monday, and my visit was restricted by my engagements to only a few days.

"Non eadem sede morantur
Majestas et amor."—Ovid.

Not having up to this period hunted in the duke's home country—the Dalkeith kennel is within six miles of Chester-hall—I had not seen Captain Keith with hounds; and he was prevented being at Dunse, during my visit to Lord Elcho, by reason of his stable going wrong. In fact, every horse in it had a screw loose, which is more than usual ill luck, even in the most punishing of our countries. On the authority of Lord Kintore, however, he is a sportsman, and, of all I heard speak of him, a horseman. I believe also I may say the same of Mr. Hay,

who I should think gives little change out of sixteen stone, with his saddle; but I left Scotland without seeing either of them in the field. Both these gentlemen went soon afterwards to Dunse for a fortnight, and were lucky in seeing four good days' sport with Lord Elcho, and a beautiful burst of thirty-nine minutes with Major St. Paul from a small patch of gorse; and over part of the same country that we went over from Learmouth-bog, at least up to the Till, which the fox did not choose to cross, but went to ground on the bank of it.

Nothing gives me a higher opinion of a man than that sort of unaffected openheartedness which lets you as it were into his character almost at first sight. This is eminently conspicuous in Mr. Adam Hay, and your readers will give me credit for the assertion from the relation of one little anecdote. I forget what led to the remark, but it must have been something in allusion to gentlemen leaving town for the country, when the session of Parliament is at an end. "When *I* was in Parliament," said he, "I read in the Morning Post, that Adam Hay, Esq. had left town for his *seat* in Scotland. They ought to have said—For his three-leg'd stool in the Bank."

In a sportsman's diary Sunday is generally a dies non: but this was not the case with me to day. For the first time in my life, I submitted myself to the discipline of the Scottish kirk. It appeared like putting the cart before the horse, instead of the horse before the cart, to hear the sermon precede the prayers; and the men all with their hats on looked queer to me; but this matters little, provided the end be answered. I must say I never saw a congregation more devout than this, or a country church more full. The style of the sermon, as well as the prayers, was extemporary and declamatory, all very well now and then, and always

well if accompanied with the touching eloquence of a Chalmers, but I cannot help thinking, that if a clergyman can preach a *tolerable* sermon out of book, as the saying is, he would preach a much better in one. The subject this day was one I have heard discussed before—namely, that *poverty is better than riches*, a doctrine that always reminds me of Seneca, with his belly-full (no man I believe had a better cook than he had), preaching against the good things of this world, and showing us the distinction between precept and example. But "Credat Judæus —*non ego*;" nor do I imagine the incumbent of Oxenford to be exactly of this opinion, as I was given to understand that if a living becomes vacant within two days' journey of the mi-nis-ter's mare, a hint is given to the patron, that it would not be unacceptable to this would-be Diogenes. But, as Shakespeare says,

> "Lowliness is young Ambition's ladder,
> Whereto the climber upwards turns his face:
> And when he once attains the upmost round,
> He then unto the ladder turns his back,
> Looks at the clouds, scorning the base degrees
> By which he did ascend."

All I can add is, if any one is inclined to swap riches for poverty, I am his man for a deal.

After the service, Captain Keith, Mr. Hay, and myself, walked round the noble domains of Oxenford-castle (General Sir John Dalrymple's then, now Earl of Stair's) and Preston-hall (Mr. Burn Callander's), and on our return visited the homestead cattle stalls of a very large farmer, a tenant upon the first named property. The arrangements for feeding were excellent, and such as for convenience and order I had not before seen excelled. There were at least a hundred head of prime

beef in the stalls, which are not every day to be met with in one man's yards.

But I have not yet finished this said Sunday. We had an addition to our dinner party of Mr. Whyte Melville, who, with Captain Wemyss, is at the head of the Fife hounds; Mr. Earle, a Lancashire gentleman, residing in Edinburgh, and—by no means a bad name for a hard rider—Mr. Horsman, also residing in the Scottish metropolis, and the unsuccessful aspirant to the honour of representing Cockermouth (ye gods what a name!) at the last general election although elected since. Mr. Melville had an elder brother with whom I became acquainted in Leicestershire and Oxfordshire—and on whose decease the gentleman I am now speaking of succeeded to his large property in the West Indies and in Fife. As I was about to visit Fife, I was happy in this opportunity of being introduced to one of the masters of the pack which hunts that celebrated county, and one of the conductors of an establishment which has so long been held in high estimation by the sporting world. A strict intimacy subsists between Captain Keith and Mr. Whyte Melville—in every respect congenial souls, both highly bred gentlemen, both delighting in hunting—but I have reason to believe the appearance of Mr. Whyte Melville at Chester-hall this day was one amongst the many proofs of my host's wish to make my visit to him more agreeable.

Fortunately for me Monday, December 1st, was a dies non—that is to say, there were no hounds to be reached on that day from Chester-hall. I say fortunately, for a more wet and boisterous one was never seen. Sportsmen's stables, however, must be replenished, and bad as it was, Captain Keith went to Edinburgh to look at a horse, with what success remained to be proved. Mr. Hay quitted us before breakfast for "his

seat" in the bank; and on me devolved the task of making the agreeable to the ladies. The case was, however, as usual, reversed. Mrs. Keith amused me greatly by a minute detail of her farming speculations conducted solely on her own account. They are not large, but have the rare qualification in these times of being profitable, which must be attributed in part to the vicinity to the metropolis—only twelve miles distant—and otherwise to her keeping her stock so well. I never saw milch cows in better condition, or more full of milk at that season of the year. How lucky would it be for our female aristocracy if, when doomed to reside in the country, those pursuits were, oftener than we find them to be, pursued by them. Milliners and dressmakers' bills, so frequently the ruin of domestic peace, would be greatly lessened by such means.

Tuesday, December 2nd.—"A willing heart," says the proverb, "adds a feather to the heel;" and although the fixture of the duke's hounds was computed to be twenty-eight miles from Chester-hall, I found it thirty. I was not to be deprived on that account of the chance of another fifty-five minutes from East Gordon-gorse, and such was the meet of the day. This was rather a long morning's trot for the month of December, but although I stopped twenty minutes at Carfrae-mill inn, for breakfast; had a high mountain to traverse, added to three miles of newly stoned road which I could not break away from; I performed the task in exactly three hours. One of King's horses* however, with no pretensions to be called a hunter, was a very capital hack, as he proved himself this day, for I galloped him nearly at the top of his speed, upon grass by the road side, for the last five miles, and he did not appear distressed. But

* An Irish horse, with twisted fore legs, but with those finely formed, lengthy shoulders which preclude the possibility of his falling down, with any thing of a horseman on his back.

I had another reason why I was not to be stopped by distance from meeting the duke's hounds this day. I had had paid me the very high compliment of a special invitation from that celebrated sportsman, Mr. Baillie of Mellerstain, to visit him after the sport of the day was concluded—considered a still higher compliment from the fact of his having been for some time precluded from the pleasure of seeing his friends by reason of a late somewhat serious indisposition, but from the effects of which he was at this time recovering.

From the celebrity given to East Gordon-gorse by the sport its foxes had afforded, in addition to Tuesday not being a hunting day with Lord Elcho, there was the largest field, this morning, that I ever saw in Scotland—not less I should say than a hundred and fifty horsemen; and the numerous carriages that stood in the road, after having discharged their loads, had quite a Ranksborough-gorse-like appearance. Amongst the spectators on foot—having just alighted from his carriage—was Mr. Baillie, to whom I was immediately introduced, and most kindly indeed was I received by him. The cover we met at, I have I believe already stated, is his own.

Having made my bow to the Duke of Buccleuch, and returned his Grace thanks for again sending me one of his own favourite horses (The Bishop), I proceeded to pay my respects to my other numerous friends. I am sorry however it is not in my power to give an interesting description of this day's sport, for although a good run was very generally looked for, from the notoriety of the cover, in addition to the "skyey influences" being apparently in favour of it, we were not in luck's way. Our first fox went gallantly away, but having been coursed by a dog he met on a moor, he was driven from his point, ran short, and was eventually

killed in the village of Greenlaw, having laid down in the minister's garden. The powers of these animals, however, as well of the fox-hound, were displayed on this occasion. On jumping up in view, in the garden, he crossed the road and sprang at a wall certainly not less than eight feet in height, the top of which he succeeded in gaining as also did one of the hounds. It was the most extraordinary feat of this description I ever beheld, but it availed him nothing, as he was pulled down by the pack in the very next field.

I witnessed a ludicrous scene on the first breaking cover by this fox. Having an eye to Williamson, I followed him to a gate out of the road, which led into the field over which the pack were streaming away, with apparently a breast-high scent, and which gate the duke was in the act of opening. "*Will it do*, your Grace? Can we get across it?" I could hear Williamson say, in somewhat a doubtful tone. "We'll try it," replied the duke, and away we went to the number of about half a dozen, all the rest of this large field having branched off to the right or to the left of the line in which the chase lay. This "it" proved to be a black bog, about twenty yards in width, which I was afterwards given to understand had never before been crossed by horsemen, at all events not in the winter months. The duke and his huntsman, however, got through it without being dismounted, but such was not my case, nor that of Frank Collison, who preceded me, by reason of our being obliged to go a few yards to the left of the spot over which our leaders had passed. But the reason for this was rather an extraordinary one. Four heavy cart colts, alarmed by the cry of the pack, rushed headlong—although approaching it from the opposite direction—into the pass which we were about to attempt, and all fell down together in a cluster, one sticking by the hinder quarters, another with his head in the bog, and one struggling

upon his back with his heels capering in the air. As for myself, I escaped pretty well, my only alarm being for the fate of my horse, it being at one time doubtful whether he would be able to struggle out of his difficulties; but Frank was not so fortunate. His young thorough-bred one rolled over him once, and then knocked him down with his head, making so complete a pie-ball of his exterior as to have an irresistibly ludicrous effect. This, added to the coolness with which this fine old sportsman endured all the buffetting and besmearing he received from the impetuosity of his nag, (for he kept up a sort of conversation with him all the time, such as "What are you about man? you are in a devil of a hurry this morning,") so provoked my risible faculties that when I got upon sound ground, nearly a minute elapsed ere I could mount my horse. Frank, however, was in his saddle in the twinkling of an eye, and putting the young one at a wall—rather a queerish place by the bye, in a corner—soon pilotted me to the hounds, which we got up to just in time to witness the destruction to our sport, by the coursing of our fox by the "coalie," as a sheep-dog is called in Scotland. Neither did we gain much by the straight cut we had taken through the turbary, for a few of those who had gone round to avoid this bog got to the hounds rather before we did, thus verifying the adage, that the farthest way about is often the nearest way home. This run lasted forty-five minutes, but there was nothing like pace after the first ten minutes. This was a very great disappointment to me, for had the fox not been coursed by the dog but taken over the fine country that was before him, there would have been a fine display of horsemanship as all the best men in the country were in the field. We found a second fox, but he was so hard pressed by the pack, who appeared to have a burning scent, that he had not courage to break cover until he was so blown that he crept into the first little drain he could find—a conduit across a road—from whence he was

bolted and killed after having been not more than fifteen minutes on his legs—but they were fifteen minutes of peril to him, for the pack were never many yards from his brush. This was a capital scenting day.

The duke rode to Edinburgh after the first run—nearer fifty than forty miles—having a relay of hacks on the road, one of which I saw at the inn at Carfrae-mill.

Williamson did not please me by his operations at this drain. In the first place, why bolt his fox at all? Surely his hounds could not have wanted blood, and this fox might have shown him a clipper on some future day. "Murdering foxes," said Mr. Meynell, "is a most absurd prodigality, seasoned foxes are as necessary to sport as experienced hounds;" and I am decidedly of his opinion. Then again he neither gave his fox a chance for his life nor consequently his field a chance of a gallop, as almost every hound was within ten yards of the drain when he jumped out of it, apparently nothing the worse, and a good country was before him.

The method taken to bolt this fox reminds me of the fact of a fox having been bolted out of a drain before these hounds the season before last, by an expedient quite new I should imagine to all the sporting world. *Our* fox was started from his hiding place by the means of a long rail which reached more than half the length of the drain; the other by means still more appalling to poor Charley's ears. The curricle mail coming past the place at the moment, either Sir David Baird or Mr. Campbell of Saddel—but I forget which—took the guard's horn (one of unusual length) and putting it up to its mouth-piece in the drain,

gave a blast that, aided by its subterraneous force, soon did the business. The cry of hounds must have been sweet music to it.

One more word or two of this Gordon country, which is becoming notorious from the sport it has shown; for when I was at Gask, Lord Kintore received a letter from Captain Barclay of Ury, to which the following P. S. was appended. "The duke has had *another* brilliant thing of fifty-seven minutes from East Gordon, and killed in the open. *Pace, tremendous;* out of a field of forty, eight only saw any thing of it." West Gordon, where the hounds met on the day I have been just speaking of, is also renowned in the domestic history of Scotland. "The parish of Gordon," says the author of the Beauties of Scotland*, "is said to have derived its name from a person, or his descendant, that came to England with William the Conqueror." Having visited Scotland during the reign of Malcolm Canmore, and killed a wild boar that infested the neighbourhood of the parish alluded to, he received a grant of certain lands there, and gave them his own name of Gordon. The Dukes of Gordon are descended from him; and in memory of this exploit, the *white boar* makes a part of the family arms.

Although we were deprived of our sport with the hounds by untoward circumstances, several little incidents occurred to make the morning of this day agreeable. One was the recapitulation of some of those which took place at the dinner given to Mr. Liston, at Edinburgh, to which I have before alluded, as also to Williamson's presence at it. He was asked by several of the field why he did not make a speech upon the occasion—particularly when the duke and his fox-hounds was drunk

* Vol. II. p. 14.

(indeed Mr. Campbell's prolific imagination made an admirable one for him on the spot, which his Grace appeared to enjoy as much as any of us); but he modestly replied that although he knew how to talk to a pack of fox-hounds in the field, he was very unfit to address a body of gentlemen in a dinner-room. "But what should you have done," said Mr. Campbell, "if the chairman had proposed your health?" "Why sir," replied Williamson; "taken up my hat, and run out of the room at once." His account to me, however, of all his proceedings on this occasion was most amusing, and I am sure will be considered so by your readers. First—his interview with Mrs. Liston on his arrival in the town before dinner. "I am highly proud of the honour, madam," said Williamson, "of paying a tribute of my respect to Mr. Liston by attending his dinner this day, which I assure you I do at great personal inconvenience, for I must be back again by ten o'clock to-morrow morning, to meet my hounds, full fafty miles from this. But it is a ma-lancholy thing for the country, madam, to think that a gentleman so eminent in his profession as Mr. Liston, and also so fine a sportsman, and so fair a rider, should leave his native toon, and go and live in London. We shall miss him sadly with the hounds." "Perhaps so," replied Mrs. Liston—in perfect good humour—"*but if it had not been for you and your hounds*, Mr. Liston would have been in London sixteen years ago." So much for the charms of fox-hunting, to which not only honours, but wealth itself succumbs.

"But," said I to Williamson, "did no one speak on the subject of fox-hunting, on such an occasion as this—a dinner given to so conspicuous a sportsman as Mr. Liston?" "No one," replied he; "but Sir David Baird's speech smelt strongly of *the shop*. In allusion to the retirement of Lord Grey, and the prospect of a competent successor to his

lordship, Sir David made a comparison to a pack of fox-hounds in chase. 'If the one that leads,' said he, 'retires, another, perhaps equally good, takes his place.' But," continued Williamson, "I rather differed with Sir David here, and pulling my next neighbour by the sleeve, whispered in his ear—*that depends on circumstances.* When all goes smooth, and well, and with a good scent, a hound of moderate abilities may guide the pack to their fox; but when difficulties occur, superior nose is wanted to insure success to the chase." Whether or not this superior nose has been found it is not for me to say; but Williamson was at his post, full fafty miles off, on the following morning, and had the satisfaction of showing an excellent day's sport.

Nothing more being about to be done after the murder of our second fox, I accompanied those eminent sportsmen, Mr. George and Mr. Robert Baillie to their father's mansion, at Mellerstain, where I anticipated the reception which I met with, from every part of the family. Some idea may be formed of the size of this mansion from the following rather remarkable coincidence:—It is said to contain just as many windows as there are days in the year, which speaks not so much for its antiquity—it has not the appearance of being an old house—as for its having been built previously to the tax upon window lights. It is, however, an immense pile, and contains some good rooms; is situated in a finely timbered domain, and in front of a noble piece of water, with a fine trout stream running through it.

But it is of the occupiers of these halls and the owner of this domain that I am now called upon to speak. The name of Baillie is conspicuous not only amongst the sportsmen, but it stands forth in the front rank of Scottish patriots, the present laird being lineally descended from, and the

actual representative of, his illustrious namesake of Jerviswood*, in the county of Lanark. His history is well known. He was the Sydney of Scotland, and suffered death in the same cause with that great patriot, during the infamous reign of the Second Charles. But, although his death was an ignominious one—he was hanged like a dog—he died nobly, and with a Roman spirit not often displayed in the last hour, inasmuch as his life would have been saved had he peached. "Tell them," said he, "who make such a proposal, that they neither know me nor my country!" Brutus did not much beat this.

The present laird of Mellerstain first kept hounds which hunted both hare and fox for several years after he came of age, but sold them in 1791, and kept fox-hounds, without any intermission, from 1792 to 1826, being thirty-four years! There is not a kennel in Scotland that has not some of his blood. He hunted Berwickshire, Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, and occasionally part of Northumberland, and his hounds were in high repute when Nim North contributed his admirable letters to the old Sporting Magazine. They have been given up about ten years, in consequence, partly, of their owner's health being scarcely equal to the fatigue of following fox-hounds, in a strongly enclosed country, and particularly so as Mr. Baillie is at the head of the high weights. I have always understood himself and his men were capitally mounted in the field, on horses bred by himself for the turf, of which he was a great supporter. The stud indeed that I saw at Mellerstain confirmed the character I heard of them. They were full of high breeding, and a bay mare of Mr. George Baillie's, (the eldest son) struck me as being the strongest tho-

* The attainder of Jerviswood, together with that of Argyll, was reversed by the Conventional Parliament at the Revolution.

rough-bred hunter I had ever before seen. Perfect, however, as this mare is, she proved the truth of the anathema pronounced against mares by the late Lord Forester, who would never have one—(nor a stallion neither) in his stable. "You can never depend *upon* a mare," he would say, "*the season throughout.* She will be very good one day, and not worth a shilling, as a hunter, the next. Nay, more than this. She will be very good at ten o'clock and very bad at twelve o'clock of the same day." I certainly saw nearly all this exemplified in the fine animal I am now speaking of. We crossed a gentleman's grounds in chase, which was divided into several compartments by rails not more than three feet in height. The mare refused them all—some once, others twice; and absolutely ran through one of them, although she could have leaped twice as high as the highest of them. The cause of this I need not trouble myself to state. In the same gentleman's stud there was a chestnut horse which he has ridden many seasons—quite a model to carry weight; and, like his father, Mr. George Baillie can give little change out of sixteen stone. He also resembles his father in another respect. He is accounted one of the best sportsmen in Scotland.

In Mr. Robert Baillie's stable there was also an immense thorough-bred horse, nearer seventeen than sixteen hands high, and with a fine set of limbs. It was his second, if not his first season; but he was progressing towards perfection. He was, however, in the right man's stable for that, for a finer horseman, or better rider to hounds than Mr. Robert Baillie is, need not go into a field, let the country or the pace be what it may. His best hunter, a thorough-bred mare, by Stainborough, I did not see out, she being unsound at the time. I have, however, reason to believe this young gentleman is not very particular about the nag he rides—let him only be well bred, and with a heart as good as his own.

I have already said that the laird of Mellerstain was at this time living in privacy on account of a recent indisposition, and consequently I did not expect to find many guests under his otherwise hospitable roof. There were, however, Mr. Henry Scott of Harden, a near relation of the Duke of Buccleuch, and Captain Elliot, brother to Sir William Elliot. But guests are not wanting at Mellerstain to make a numerous fire-side, forasmuch as when they are all at home, the sons and daughters, with the laird and his lady, are quite equal to that. I should have much liked to have seen this family party entire, as from what I have seen, and from what I have heard of them, they do honour to the human race. It is not usual to place young ladies under the standard, therefore on that subject I am silent; but *all* the sons stand upwards of six feet, without their shoes!

At the hour of six precisely, we found ourselves at the dinner table, no bad finish to a long morning's work. But independently of mere animal gratification, it was here that I had the pleasure of discerning the flattering estimate my host had formed of his stranger guest. Not only was I commanded by him, when dinner was announced, to offer my arm to his lady, in the presence of two, my superiors in rank, but he had ordered his butler to produce a bottle of wine, and as he informed me, nearly the last *of such wine perhaps as could scarcely be matched in Europe*. It was the wine of Syracuse—such as we may conclude Archimedes, who was born there, may have drunk, or Cicero in his Ædileship—*that had been in the cellar of himself and his ancestors, exactly one hundred and one years!!* Very old and very bad wine are, generally speaking, synonymous words; but here was a striking exception to the rule. This wine had not only not lost its strength, but there was a richness of flavour scarcely to be expected in wine of such an age.

and not wanting in aroma, or what the French call "bouquet." What the original colour of Syracuse wine may be, I know not, but this resembled sherry, with somewhat of a brown hue. Mr. Cyrus Redding, in his history and description of modern wines, says, the wines of Sicily are good and strong. Of what strength must this have been when it first came from the vat? In the time of the elder Pliny, we are told there was wine selling at four pounds, of our money, per ounce, by reason of its having been made during the consulship of Opimus, and consequently a century older than that of the Laird of Mellerstain! This however must have been of a rare quality, for it was Pliny's opinion that, speaking generally, wine was not fit to drink after its twentieth year. "Non alia res majus incrementum sentit ad vigesimum annum, majusque ab eo dispendium."

There is no more exhilirating sight than a large and affluent family living together in a state of unreserved unity and affection. No wonder it has been styled the "*precious* ointment," which brightens every thing by its presence, or "the dew of Hermon," which refreshes as it falls, for its price is not known until it is lost, and then it is often looked for again in vain. This agreeable picture is to be seen in the family of which I am now speaking, and in colours of the brightest hue. It is true nature has fixed the limits of youth, beauty, and vigour; but, thank heaven, she has not set bounds either to the cheerfulness of the spirits, or to the gaiety of the heart; and a merrier party was never assembled than that of which I had the pleasure on this day to form one within the walls of Mellerstain. It was not "song on song deceived the night," but story after story, anecdote after anecdote, of hounds, horses, men, and women, until another scene was to open to our view—the drawing room, where for the first time, I saw the dancing of the Highland reel, to its own proper music, and in its own proper form. No sooner was coffee over,

but the sound of music arose in one part of this large room, and as if by the tap of the enchanter's wand all present, excepting Mr. and Mrs. Baillie and myself, were upon their legs in one minute, and in "attitude," as the fighting men used to say, in another. But the music! It was not—"Daughter of Toscar bring my Harp;" but the chief performer in this rapid, and consequently difficult execution, was Andrew Lumsden, the laird's old huntsman, and how little soever in accordance may be the unison of huntsman and fiddler, Scotland cannot, I understand, show a better performer in this department of the fiddling art, than the said Andrew, whose ear was once, perhaps, more tuned to more congenial sounds. Being no judge of music, I have pronounced this encomium on Andrew, upon authority better than my own; but I must say, as far as I am a judge, he is capital over the catgut, whatever he might have been over the grass, on Vixen, Snip, or Rattler, his three favourite hunters, which he is very fond of talking of, but which I, to my cost, never saw. I can only say, I stood by his side this evening whilst he accompanied one of the young ladies on her piano forte, in a Highland reel, and I can answer for his having gone the pace then. No fiddler's elbow, I should think, ever travelled faster.

Between the reels I had a word or two with Andrew, whose old soul seemed mellowed—first, by the inspiration of music, which he appeared really to enjoy; secondly, by seeing his worthy master's family amusing themselves, partly through his means; and lastly, by a jug of good Scotch ale which he had very nearly found the bottom of. "The wrong sort of music this, for *you*, Andrew," said I to him, in a kind of under tone. "It's na like t'other," said he, "I ken what you mean; but its na much amiss when a man grows auld." I looked at Andrew, then at his master, and muttered to myself, "I wish I could give you *both* the

Promethean touch of youth." "You appear to have escaped well, Andrew," resumed I, "after hunting hounds so long in so many rough countries." "Wall," replied he, "there's na much the matter there, but I was light, and generally wall-mounted." "I have read of your favourite hunters, Vixen, Snip, and Rattler." "Ah!" said he—his eyes brightening at the time—"Vixen and Rattler were but wee morsels to look at, but not many could gang by them, wi' a hull (a hill) in their teeth." "Thorough-bred ones of course," I observed. Andrew nodded assent, and putting the fiddle under his chin, obeyed the signal for another reel. He afterwards told me of a wonderful escape for his life, that he had when riding Vixen, the particulars of which I cannot at this moment recollect.

Having never seen either Andrew or his hounds in the field, I must of course be silent as to their merits; but the following anecdote of the former amused me, and it is in character with the dash of the fox-hound, the principal feature in his nature after all. "Why stop those hounds?" said Sir David Baird to him one day, as a whipper-in was endeavouring to do so, it being *suspected* they were on a wrong scent. "Never heed him, Sir David," observed Andrew; "*he'll na stop them if they are on a fox.*"

Although unable to speak, from personal observation, to the merits of Mr. Baillie's fox-hounds, I may safely record them, on the authority of those well able to appreciate them, and they are generally well spoken of in Scotland. Their character, indeed, is thus neatly sketched by the able pen of Nim North. "His (Mr. Baillie's) hounds are very large, *of a capital sort*, having been crossed with the best packs in the kingdom, and can go as fast as any I know of; and you may depend

upon it, require a good horse and a good rider to stick to them. His establishment is maintained in first-rate style without any subscription—huntsman, two whippers-in, &c. They are all well-mounted, for he breeds for the turf, and when they do not turn out racers, he puts them into the hunting stable." In another place this writer does justice to the master and his men. "Like master like man," says he, "all Baillie's men are very civil, and Andrew Lumsden, the huntsman, uncommonly so."

The morning following this, to me, most agreeable evening, was passed very much in the manner in which most mornings are passed at the houses of fox-hunters, on non-hunting days. The first step was to the stables, which are most commodious and excellent; and although not filled as they were wont to be when the kennel was also filled, contained some good hunters, the property of the two only sons then remaining at home. In one of these stables, I passed a delightful hour, when listening to Mr. Baillie, seated on the corn chest and recapitulating some of the proceedings of the Mellerstain hounds, and those who followed them in former days. Amongst others, the following anecdote amused me, "You may find some of my blood," said he, "in your friend Lord Kintore's kennel; and," added he, "you may perhaps hear his lordship, as a friend of mine once heard him, holloaing—'Have at him, old Baillie,' to a hound in chase; and, '*old Baillie again*,' at another good hit." He then spoke of the Hon. John Elliot, of whom Nim North speaks so handsomely as a sportsman, a horseman, and a companion,—and regretted his absence in India. When at the Cape of Good Hope, said Mr. Baillie, he went out with the hounds, mounted by a rich butcher. "It does me good," said the butcher, "to see that *thick* man ride." By all I have heard of him it would do me good to see this thick gentleman in any situation, but I fear I never shall.

" What fates impose, that men must needs abide,
It boots not to resist both wind and tide;"

But there were no steam-boats when Shakespeare penned these lines.

In the course of this agreeable hour's chat Mr. Baillie informed me of the singular fact that he was the first master of hounds to send his fixtures to a newspaper. Nor was this all, the proprietor of one attempted to fix him with the charge of twenty-two pounds, for *advertisements*, but failed. The proprietor must have been a slow hand; for all newspapers have found their account in being the medium of making public the fixtures of various packs of hounds; and before the practice became so general as it now is, I knew many sportsmen who took certain newspapers solely on that account. Still it would be well if London editors, or their subs, would condescend to throw their eye over these announcements, as it often happens that the fixture is gone by ere the journal reaches the country. Again, we often see the word " to-morrow" to a fixture two hundred miles distant. The space thus occupied might be turned to better account, in the same line of information. Mr. Baillie was likewise the first to introduce into Scotland the celebrated breed of South-down sheep, a flock of which I saw in his grounds, but not near enough to form a judgment of them. And I saw, on another part of his domain, what should be seen on that of every sportsman who can afford the expense of it, I saw some worn-out hunters enjoying the repose of an inactive life, and *well fed*—without which, and warm sheds, it is more merciful to destroy them. The Laird of Mellerstain has read Virgil:—

" Hunc quoque, ubi aut morbo gravis, aut jam segnior annis
Deficit, abde domo, nec turpi ignosce senectæ."

Our conversation in the stable ended with the following injunction from Mr. Baillie. "When you visit Lord Kintore," said he, "at Gask, don't forget to see John Crack who resides at Turriff. He is the oldest huntsman now alive in Scotland, and I think he will amuse you with some of his anecdotes of days long since gone past." This injunction I was not likely to overlook; the very name was a security against my doing so, crack men, crack hounds, and crack horses being the main objects of my pursuit.

Previously to our return to the house, we strolled about the domain, and Mr. Baillie appeared to feel an honourable pride in showing me the neat and comfortable houses in which his labourers and artizans, necessary to such an establishment as his, are lodged. Amongst others I stepped into that of the family blacksmith who happened to be within it at the moment. "So," said I, "you take Bell's Life in London, do you?" (the last number lay on his table, pretty well thumbed.) "Ay, do I;" replied this son of Vulcan, a very respectable looking man, as the term is, "and *I ken who you are*; I have read your writings." "Then I hope you are the better for them," was my rather natural remark. "Wall I am *none the warse*," was all I got from him in reply.

> ——"Oh, that men's ears should be
> To counsel deaf, but not to flattery!"

This was somewhat of a damper.

We proceeded on our walk. "Did you ever eat a haggess?" said Mr. Baillie to me, as we approached the mansion. "Never," replied I; "neither do I think from what I have heard of it, I ever shall. They tell me it is a sheep's head, dressed with the wool on, with the agreeable

addition of liver and lights." "Don't regard what you have heard of it," resumed the laird; "we will have one at dinner to-day." We had one and I tasted it; but I think what was said of the Spartan broth may be said of the haggess. To like the one, a man should be dipped in the Eurotas, and to like the other, he should be born in Scotland. That is to say, he should be used to it from infancy. "Take the *dish* to Mr. A.," said Mr. Baillie, seeing I did not eat what I had on my plate; "perhaps he will like it better when he sees it." But it is not every thing that will stand close inspection, nor would this.

At two o'clock the whole party—male and female—walked to view, what we call in the South, the Homestead, or the Barton as it is termed in the North; in plainer English, the place where all farming operations are performed, save those carried on in the fields, and to which all produce is brought home, and secured—distant about a mile from the mansion house. The amount of live and dead stock here, showed the owner to be a farmer upon a very extensive scale; but the chief object of attraction was a water-wheel of a very large diameter, which sets agoing a corn mill, with three pair of stones, a bone-crushing mill, and a saw mill. The latter I had never before seen at work; but from the rapidity with which it cuts every description of wood into any substance that may be required, and, *especially, rails for fences*, such an engine should be erected upon every large estate which will admit of its being driven by water.

The bone-mill is likewise a most valuable adjunct in countries where the material can be conveniently found. Mr. Baillie's is in great part supplied by the gypsies of Yeth-holm, (muggers, as they are called in this part of Scotland,) who collect the bones from the various kennels,

private houses, and villages in the neighbourhood; and, as it fortunately happened—for every thing relating to this race of people is interesting—one of them, apparently a very old man, arrived with a cart load of bleached bones during our visit. As may be supposed, I had some conversation with this would-be Æthiopian, and found him, what they are all indeed, shrewd and very ready with answers, delivered in their usual quaint terms of expression; but was it not from the wandering tribes of ancient Greece that the world is indebted for all that contributes to sweeten and embellish social life? Regarding the first named wild and wayward tribe, indeed, it has been elegantly observed, that men of letters, whilst eagerly investigating the customs of Otaheite or Kamschatka, and losing their tempers in endless disputes about Gothic and Celtic antiquities, have witnessed with apathy and contempt the striking spectacle of a gypsy camp. Leyden has painted them to the life

> "With loitering steps from town to town they pass,
> Their lazy dames rock'd on the pannier'd ass.
> From pilfer'd roots, or nauseous carrion, fed,
> By hedge-rows green they strew the leafy bed;
> While scarce the cloak of tawdry red conceals
> The fine-turn'd limbs, which every breeze reveals;
> Their bright black eyes through silken lashes shine,
> Around their necks their raven tresses twine;
> But chilling damps, and dews of night impair
> It's soft sleek gloss, and tan the bosom bare."

"I have read," said I to Mr. Baillie, "that these 'Lordes of Little Egypt,' in addition to their strong spirit of independence, have some kind of honour in their community; how do you find them in your dealings with them?" "Tolerably correct," he replied; "although this old fellow did once sell me the bones of a favourite old hunter which I had had buried in his shoes and skin." "That was *well* done,"

resumed I; "I should like to know to whom he sold the shoes and the skin."

On our road homewards, I, for the first time in my life, heard the word "laird," applied in propria persona. "I don't see the laird coming," said Mrs. Baillie, looking back towards the farm. Now there is, to my ear, something soothing as well as patriarchal in this word *laird*, and though not so high sounding and aristocratical as *thane*, is a thousand times better than *squire*.

It is impossible to be long in Mr. Baillie's presence without something to make you laugh. As we entered Mellerstain-house, a portrait in one of the passages attracted my notice. "I can tell you a good anecdote about that old fellow," said the laird; "his name was Duncan Gordon, and he was huntsman to my father. There happened to be, at one time, some savage hounds in his kennel, which it was by no means safe for any person to approach, unless very well known to them. On the wife of this man being one day seen coming out of it, *by herself*, she was asked, if she were not afraid to trust herself there alone? 'Na, na,' she replied; 'they na meddle wi' me; I suppose they find something of Duncan aboot me.'" This almost comes up to the notion of Homer in the Odyssey, and which notion, as I have read, was once popular in Scotland—that dogs are sensible when a good or evil spirit comes into a house:—

> "The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread
> Of power divine, and howling, trembling fled."

After another agreeable evening within the walls of Mellerstain; another specimen of Andrew's fiddling; a good night's rest and a Scotch

breakfast, I mounted my hack and returned to my quarters at Chester-hall; and with a tinge on my mind that, unless deprived of recollection, can never be effaced. It was my first visit to a Scotch family, and to one of which, having heard and read so much, I had almost made myself believe I was already acquainted with. I had also the satisfaction of knowing that I had made acquaintance of *one of the first sportsmen in all Scotland*, and from the pressing invitation to repeat my visit, of indulging in the hope that that acquaintance was likely to be continued.

On my arrival at Chester-hall, I found a letter from Mr. Ramsay of Barnton, the master of the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire fox-hounds, which, besides others, hunt the West-Lothian country, considered the best in Scotland. It was dated from Calder-house, the seat of Lord Torphichen, who is father to his lady, and contained the agreeable intimation, that he should be happy to show me his hounds, and mount me,—naming the following Saturday, as a fair fixture and a sure find; and saying that a horse should be at the cover for me. On the following day then—Friday, December 5th—I took my departure for Edinburgh, accompanied by Captain Keith, and took up my abode at Douglas's Hotel in St. Andrew's Square—the Fenton's of Edinburgh. This I did at the suggestion of Lord Kintore, who, knowing I should be only a few days in the Metropolis—for these swell hotels, as John Warde said of the Pytchley-hunt dinners, when he hunted Northamptonshire, are "all very well but the reckoning"—wished me to have a taste of this house, which he assured me is the best he ever broke bread in, in any part of the world, and I can fully confirm his encomium.

I had not been long in Edinburgh before I called upon Messrs. Blackwood, the celebrated publishers of George-street, and arrived at a

lucky moment, for in ten minutes Professor Wilson made his appearance, and requested to be introduced to me. This was followed, instanter, by an invitation to dinner; in two hour's time I had my feet under his mahogany, and the very name of my host is a sufficient voucher for a most agreeable evening. We talked of every thing but moral philosophy, of which Mr. Wilson is Professor; but as that celebrated naturalist Mr. James Wilson, the Professor's brother, was one of the party, *natural philosophy*, which includes fox-hunting, was a frequent topic. "I have been in at more deaths this year, than you will be in at," said this well-known entomologist to me, facetiously; "I have killed one hundred and sixty-four different kinds of beetles." "Indeed!" I replied, "I was not aware there were so many to be found." (Ray only reckons one hundred and fifty-four.) And I wonder how many butterflies you have impaled, thought I, quietly within myself! But I rather like to hear of these scientific tormentors of insect life; they form somewhat of a set off against the charge of cruelty we fox-hunters labour under, in the torments we inflict upon the animal world. Shakespeare says,

> "The poor beetle that we tread upon,
> In corporal sufferance feels a pang as great
> As when a giant dies!"

I am not able to say, exactly, how long the Linlithgow hounds have been established, but I believe about fifteen years. They are in the hands of a good man named Scott,—commonly called "old Scott"—particularly good I was given to understand in the kennel department and an excellent servant throughout. He is a Yorkshireman, as his tongue proclaims; and was brought up in the racing stables of Sir William Maxwell, and now, as he himself says, "walks fourteen stone upon the same legs that carried him when he rode exercise in Sir

William's service." Although, as I have already said of him, an excellent servant, he is not the most polished of his caste. Neither do I suppose, by the orthography displayed in the list of his hounds, that the schoolmaster had been "abroad" in his younger days; but what was the printer of Falkirk about to let such a list go forth to the world? I can only account for it by his taking for granted that we fox-hunters have an orthography of our own*. However, to business.

The fixture on this Saturday (the 6th) was Ormiston-hill, about twelve miles from Edinburgh, on the Glasgow road, and, as I was informed by Mr. Ramsay, a sure find. Being anxious then to have a sight of the hounds previous to their being thrown into cover, as well as to have a word with "old Scott," I took time by the forelock, and came up with them about three miles short of it. I first took the measure of Scott with my eye before I ventured to ride alongside him, and found him exactly what I had conceived him to be—rather over topped, as we say in the stable, but not looking much amiss in his saddle; with a ruddy, but healthy looking face, and somewhat of an intellectual eye. This being accomplished, I ventured to address him, and the dialogue, as will be imagined, was not much amiss.

Nimrod.—"A bad morning for hounds I fear." (It was blowing something like a hurricane.)

Scott.—"Yes"—the word *yes* sounding very much like the German

* As in these days of "Schoolmasters abroad" we don't often meet with such specimens, I subjoin the following:—Prosopene, Barroness, Willin, Breuser, Matchom, Streacher, Mamlock (for Mameluke, I presume). What *Vilo* means I am unable to guess, were it not the name of a bitch, I should have taken it for *Filho* (da Puta).

word *yau*, which also is opposed to negative; at the same time, throwing his eye over me with a look (I was not in scarlet) which as much as said —"What the devil do *you* know about a bad morning for hounds."

Nimrod.—You have got some powerful hounds here, Mr. Scott.

Scott.—"Yes," (or rather yau, again); at the same time singing out "Ware horse, Belmaid†, (one of the finest bitches in the pack by the bye) what do you do under horse's feet, eh?"

Nimrod.— Are those Mr. Ramsay's horses that are forward on the road.

Scott.—Yes.

Nimrod.—I am going to ride one of them to-day.

Scott.—(With a slight touch of his cap.) Oh, you be Mr. Appleby, be you? Glad to see you, sir; I've heard talk of *you*. You have been to see Lord Kintore, hav'nt you?

Nimrod.—Not yet; but intend doing so soon.

Scott.—*A very quick man in the kennel*, that Lord Kintore.

Nimrod.—Yes, and out of it too.

Scott here alluded to his lordship's uncommon facility of knowing the names of hounds, after having once seen them drawn to the feeding

†Alias *Bell*maid. Vide List.

troughs. Walker told me he knew every one, save one, of the South Wold pack, when he drew them for his inspection.

This reminds me of two anecdotes. A major of a crack regiment once asked Mr. Assheton Smith how he managed to remember the names of all his hounds? "Pray, sir," replied Mr. S. "don't you know the names of all your men?" A quondam master of fox hounds, however, never could acquire a knowledge of more than a few couples of his kennel, saying—"How is it possible to know them all? When I look at a hound on one side I find three spots; but if he turns the other to me, I find five." Some brothers and sisters, however, are sometimes so much alike that it even puzzles their owners to distinguish them, as in the case with Dragsman and Dragman in Lord Kintore's kennel. I observed his lordship always looked at their legs before he drew them to the trough, one not being quite so straight at the knee as the other. Huntsmen also distinguish, in great part, by the countenance, as shepherds do sheep.

In ten minutes more we were at the place of meeting, where a sufficiently numerous field were got together; and although a stranger to Mr. Ramsay, I was instantly set at my ease by his approaching me with outstretched hand, and telling me he was happy to see me with his hounds. He then apologized for not having sent for me quite the horse he wished to send, in consequence of his stable having gone wrong, as the term is. "I have plenty of them," said he, "but am unfortunate in having several at present amiss, and the horse you are going to ride is rather short of work, as I have only lately purchased him. On our next day's hunting I shall be able to mount you better*."

* Among other casualties, Mr. Ramsay told me three of his horses had gone wrong through being clipped. I shall never hold with that practice, neither did I see a dozen hunters clipped in Scotland.

Amongst all the truisms which Beckford published, relating to the science and practice of hunting, there is none more worthy of regard than that which points out the disadvantages under which hounds labour in high winds; stating, emphatically, that "the kennel is the best place for hounds on a windy day." The force of this remark was amply exemplified on the morning I am speaking of. Mr. Ramsay's hounds are noted for their steadiness; but had a person, unaccustomed to hunting, and consequently unequal to making those allowances which accidental circumstances demand; had such a person, I repeat, seen them draw for their first fox this day, and then left them, he would have left them with the impression that they were wildness personified. In short, they were running about in all directions, and would neither come to horn nor holloa!

Our first scent was on a disturbed fox which we could not hunt up to, to do any good with, so went to try for another. We found in Calder-wood, the most extraordinary, and the most romantic place, save one, that I ever saw a pack of fox-hounds thrown into. In fact it was a place that appeared to me like a forlorn-hope; but owing to a combination of circumstances, for instance, an improvement in the day, and the exertions of the men, (the activity and science displayed by the first whipper-in delighted me; he was a perfect Mungo, here, there, and every where, telegraphing with his hand and whip when he could not be heard, and giving the office with his voice when he could,) added to the steady working of the hounds, our fox quitted this wild ravine, and boldly faced the open country. But I shall not soon forget the crossing of this ravine, or the rocky bottomed brook that was roaring in the hollow, or the narrow path by which we gained the opposite side. The scene was really an imposing one. The clatter of the horses' feet among the stones, as they scrambled, as it were,

——— "Up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,"

with the cry of the hounds, beautifully re-echoed from the deep and winding valley which was below us, gave a wildness to the scene seldom experienced in fox-hunting, and requiring an abler pen than mine to describe.

When once clear of this awkward and perplexing defile, a good country presented itself; the pack settled down to their fox, and I thought we were in for a second East Gordon clipper, as these out-of-the-way-looking places generally produce those that can fly for their lives. At the end of a mile and a half, however, the hounds came to a check in a road which would have been a fatal one but for the following circumstance. As Lord Hopeton and myself were in the act of leaping a low wall into the road, his lordship exclaimed to me "*There is the scent*"—catching with his eye, what escaped mine, namely, two couples of hounds carrying it down a strip of plantations, on the opposite side of the road. Clapping spurs to my horse, I gave Scott the office, and he instantly brought the body of the pack on the line, but they soon threw up again. Having an eye to his point however, he persisted in pursuing the line, even beyond what appeared to me to be warrantable, as not a hound even feathered on a scent; but he was rewarded for his perseverance. He had the pleasure of seeing his hounds take up the scent all at once through a gate, into a grass field, and never quit it till they ran into their fox at the end of forty minutes, (an hour in all,) over a fine scenting country! I did not see the finish, having been "ten minutes behind time," as we say on the road; but the depth of the ground and the pace were not suited to something little better than dealers' condition, and I was fearful of trespassing too far upon a promising young horse, which Mr. Ramsay told me was not in strong work.

Two horses distinguished themselves in this short, but sharp affair, and were in consequence sold. One was a bay horse ridden by a wealthy farmer by the name of Wilkie—the Thomlin of that part of the world—and purchased by Captain Peter Hay, of Mugdrum-house, in Fife, (who went as usual on his celebrated old horse Coroner,) at the now large price of two hundred guineas. The other was a grey, showing a great deal of blood, and who, although sadly over-weighted—but none but the well-bred ones can do it—cleared a ditch and a bank and a wall in great style towards the end of the run. The space covered was afterwards measured by Mr. Wilkie, and found to be twenty-two feet, from hind foot to hind foot. It is true he had a good workman upon his back, of the name of Mountain, formerly groom to Colonel Fotheringham, of whom I have already spoken, as having had Mr. Musters for his guest. Two or three of the field were nibbling at the grey, amongst them Captain P. Hay and Mr. Ramsay; but declined him on account of his speedy-cutting, as it is termed; but as I hold that to be no serious objection to a good hunter, I recommended him to Sir David Baird, who purchased him*.

Mr. Ramsay rode a very clever hunter this day—a chestnut, with a blaze of white down his face—which I was told is his favourite horse, and he certainly appeared perfect. Lord Hopetoun was also splendidly mounted, and rode well to the hounds. I do hope, however, I may live to see the scissors applied to the tails of hunters. What is the object of the switch tail? Is it to make the hunters under sixteen stone,—about Lord H.'s mark—look like the racer under seven? Its effect is destruc-

* In a letter I received from a friend, describing a capital hill run of fifty minutes with the Duke of Buccleuch, at the end of last season, it was stated that Captain Peter Hay showed them all the way on this horse, the last quarter of an hour.

tive to horses of more than a certain degree of substance—so much so indeed, that an inexperienced eye might have mistaken this fine hunter for a brood mare just brought from the paddock. That noted old sportsman, Major Shairp of Houston, also went well on a weedy thorough-bred mare. I saw him jump a very wide place, from a stand, in which he showed how well he could handle them; and he can go the pace too. On perceiving he carried music about him, I asked him how happened it? "Why," replied he; "this mare was sound when I turned her out, but she came up a whistler." "Major," said I; "you and myself came into the world about the same time; have you not yet found out, what I found out thirty-two years ago—to let well alone; and that half the hunters in Great Britain have been destroyed by being turned out to grass?" The major said, as we often say on other occasions, "*I won't do so again.*"

There was something about this Major Shairp that took my fancy much, independently of his fine horsemanship, and nerve, not very common at his period of life; and also of his reputation as a sportsman, which stands high in Scotland. There appeared a straight-forward openheartedness about him, which, although extremely agreeable in all descriptions of men, is, I must say, the general characteristic of the sportsman.

It is well said by Aristotle, "That he who is pleased with solitude, must either be a beast, or a god!" As I hope I am not the one, and am sure I am not the other, I have no predilection for an evening by myself, even at Douglas's hotel, with only a newspaper to read. Such, however, would have been the case on the evening of this day, had it not been for a somewhat strange occurrence. It being dark when I arrived in Edinburgh, and having forgotten on which side of the square my hotel was

situated, I was in the act of asking an old woman, when a voice exclaimed—"What! Nimrod is that you?" Who should it be but a near neighbour of mine in this country, (France,) who was just arrived in Edinburgh to arrange some domestic affairs; and happening to be disengaged, he came and passed the evening with me!

Previously to my rising on the following morning, (Sunday, 7th) a note was brought to me from my old acquaintance Captain Dowbiggen, to invite me to breakfast with him at the Royal Hotel, in Princess-street, when I should meet his brother-in-law, the Hon. Fox Maule; and after church, Captain Dowbiggen and myself went to pay our respects to a very celebrated character in our line—the *Captain* Ross of the Red-house, and of Melton Mowbray, but the *Mr.* Horatio Ross of Scotland, late M. P. for Montrose, and at that time a candidate for Paisley. He was residing in Melville-street, Edinburgh, awaiting the arrival of his son and heir, who made his appearance soon afterwards, but not in time for me to have a view of him.

If he makes a better man than his father is, no one will complain of him on that score; and if he makes as good a one, he will do. The result of our visit was an invitation to dinner, and I was delighted at finding myself once more under the roof of not only a kind and sincere friend, but of a gentleman who has done so much to uphold the character of a sportsman, and of sporting generally.

Our next visit was to the stables of Mr. Inglis, the principal Edinburgh horse-dealer; and I found him, what Lord Elcho had represented him to be—a person of respectable appearance, and of good address, entirely divested of blarney. In other words, he appeared to be a man with

whom business could be transacted off-hand, in a straight-forward, business-like manner, which cannot be said of all those who follow his calling. There is generally too much "*gab*" about them, to use a still more vulgar term, and a lesson from Hesiod on the provident use of the tongue—*the happy medium*—would be of more service than they are aware of. I have been more than once under the necessity of exclaiming to a dealer,—"D—n it, my good fellow, tell me the price of your horse, and *I'll find out the rest myself.*"

As may be supposed, during the hour I passed in Mr. Inglis's stables, horses, their form, and merits, were the chief topic of our conversation. "Have you purchased that horse for Lord Kintore yet?" said I to Mr. Inglis, with a look which he understood. "I have not," he replied; "but if you will tell me where he is to be found, I will go some hundred miles (and put some hundreds in my pocket) to see him." But hereon hangs a tale. Being about to describe the form and points of a hunter, for a certain work, I wrote to Lord Kintore, to request he would give me his ideas of the modern hunter, in his very best form. My friend's answer was to the purpose,—the following transcript of a letter he had that day written to Inglis:—

"When you happen to have a horse answering this description, drop me a line:—Thorough-bred, with substance and action; fit to carry fourteen stone *through dirt;* height 15 . 2; not more than seven years old; colour dark brown, dark grey, dark chesnut, or dark bay; small head; large nostril; no coaching neck; light at the throat lash; good shoulders; deep at his girth; with strong back and loins; good gaskins; good sound feet and legs; neither too short nor too long in the pasterns; warranted sound, and with good temper."

I think my brother sportsmen will admit, that a more graphic description of the modern hunter could not have been given in fewer words. Mr. Inglis showed me this letter on his file, and said he should preserve it as a guide to his future purchases, although he feared it might be long ere he met with the animal it described.

The month of December is not the time to see many good hunters in a dealer's stable; and I have reason to believe, they are pretty quickly, after their arrival in Edinburgh, picked out of these and the other sale-stables, if likely to "do the trick." Mr. Inglis had but a few in his, and those not exactly my sort; but he told me he was on the point of setting out for Yorkshire to procure a fresh lot, that being the county to which he looks for a supply. When on the subject of horses, and their essentials, however, he mentioned a fact that surprised me. It was that of a horse which *had been hunted thirty-one seasons;* that he was still alive, and at Mr. Ramsay's, of Barnton. We may here conclude one of two things—that he was hunted with harriers or beagles; or that he belonged to one of Williamson's "pusilanimous riders*."

Monday, 8th.—Met Mr. Ramsay again, about ten miles from Edinburgh, the morning stormy and wild—"ventosus" again, as Lord Kintore says, with the addition of a driving snow storm, that drove me into a house for shelter, on my road to cover. But by way of amends for this, I saw something as I rode along, to amuse me. I observed a man upon a bay horse, two or three hundred yards a-head of me, which I concluded he was taking to meet the hounds. I observed his horse stop short and

* Some one was describing a run of a certain extent to Williamson, in which the hounds had run clean away from the field. "Indeed!" said he, "and over that fine country, too! Surely they must have been mounted on *vary* indifferent horses, or been vary *pu-si-la-ni-mous* riders."

kick. I thought little of this; he might be fresh, and I only hoped the kick would be taken out of him before night. I then got along-side of him, and a short parley took place between his rider and myself—having first satisfied myself that this said horse had been given up by Sir David Baird, who had him at Dunse, as perfectly useless as a hunter, for he would not only refuse his fences, but stand still and kick in the middle of a field, while the hounds were running:—

Nimrod.—You have a fine slapping horse there.—(He was quite the stamp for Leicestershire.)

Servant.—A capital hunter, sir.

Nimrod.—Is he temperate with hounds?

Servant.—A child may ride him, sir.

Nimrod.—Why put that martingal on him?

Servant.—Master likes it, sir; no sort of occasion for it.

Nimrod.—What made him stop and kick with you on the road?

Servant.—Full of play, sir; he saw that there donkey.—(I saw no donkey.)

Nimrod.—Is he for sale?

Servant. Yes, sir.

Nimrod.—His price?

Servant.—A hundred guineas.

Nimrod.—Warranted sound?

Servant.—Yes, sir.

Nimrod.—And good-tempered.

Servant.—Yes, sir.

A gentleman coming up at the moment, with whom I entered into conversation, our parley ended, and I dropped astern again. Very shortly afterwards, however, I saw my old acquaintance once more at his "play," but the man managed him well, and he went on. Getting alongside him a second time, the parley was resumed.

Nimrod.—So you have had another game at *play*.

Servant.—Yes, sir; he seed that there windmill.—(Now there *was* a windmill, and going at a merry pace too, but it was rather better than half a mile distant, at an acute angle.)

Nimrod.—Pray, did I not see this horse lately at Dunse, with Lord Elcho's hounds?

Servant.—Mayhap you might, sir.

Now there is a saying amongst horse-dealers—this horse belonged to one of the fraternity—and one by no means at variance with the soundest logic of the schools—namely, "If we buy the devil, we must sell the devil;" but who was the purchaser of this "devil" I know not. There may be, however, some who have not in their "mind's eye" a just comprehension of the sort of person who was on this occasion employed to prove the value of this logical argument. In other words, they may have never remarked the peculiar stamp and character of a horse-dealer's man, of whom I will now give a sketch, taken on the day I am speaking of, from the life:—

He was a shortish man, not heavy of course, and what there was of him lay chiefly in his carcase, for of legs he had anything but the Irishman's share. He had bloated cheeks and a round face, which perhaps looked rounder than it really was, by the help of a sort of skimming-dish-looking hat; his nose had every appearance of having been formed for the purpose of inhaling the fragrance of whiskey or gin. Neither were his clothes a whit less in character. They consisted of a brown frock coat, and black waistcoat, none the better for wear; dark-coloured corderoy breeches, made darker by town smoke and sundry other aids, which, with small and very shallow cloth tops to a pair of very seedy boots, and an old spotted cravat, made the *toilette* complete. How admirably has Martial—barring the one eye—described a person of this sort, and what may be expected of him:—

> "Crine ruber, niger ore, brevis pede, lumine læsus:
> Rem magnam præstas, Zoile, si bonus es."

I liked the appearance of things at the cover side this morning—a fine gorse cover in a roomy country; and Mr. Ramsay mounted me on a

strapping grey horse, that had lately cost him two hundred guineas, and which appeared to me to know his business, and also to be pretty fit to go. There was, however, I am sorry to add, nothing for him to do. The morning was wild; the foxes bad; and it would be a waste of words and time to give the result.

I must not here depart from my general practice of offering a few remarks upon the hounds and their huntsman. The general character of the Linlithgow pack may, I think, be summed up in a few words. They are not hounds to strike the eye, or exactly perhaps to please the eye of a nice observer of form and points. It is evident, indeed, that in the breeding and the drafting of them, appearances have not been allowed to preponderate much in the scales. There are some coarse hounds among them; nevertheless they are a very business-like looking pack, taken as a whole, and the character they bear is highly creditable to them. It is indeed from character—from report chiefly that I am enabled to speak of their performances; for with the exception of the finish to the first day's run, no circumstances could be more untoward than those under which it was my ill fortune to see them. But the man who wishes to see hounds in perfection, must first ask permission of the heavens.

Of their huntsman, Scott, I am also unable to say much except from general report, which speaks favourably of him. His condition I thought good; but it is in the kennel that he is considered to shine. As a huntsman he labours under disadvantages—not those of age, for although he has the honourable appellation of "Old Scott," there is nothing against him on that score. But no man of his form can ride forward enough to see hounds in all their work, over any country that

I have yet seen, much less over his, which is strongly fenced and deep. If, however—as I said of Stephen Goodhall, when he hunted Sir Thomas Mostyn's pack—Scott could hover over his hounds in a balloon, or fly through the air like Pacolet on his wooden horse, no one would doubt the full value of his directing hand. It is hardly fair to pronounce an opinion on the merits of a huntsman, principally from common report; but the frequent mention I heard made of the one I have been speaking of, in part removes this objection. Scott's long experience, and general knowledge of hounds and hunting, make him often quoted in Scotland as authority; and, moreover, he has been the theme of many a good joke. In short—he is what is called a character, as the following anecdotes will show. Being some distance behind his hounds one day when they were running very hard, Mr. Maxwell (the son of his first master, Sir William) passed him, with the hope of being able to catch them. "It wont do, sir," holloas Scott to him; "'tis no use your haggrivating your horse in that manner; *if you was on a heagle you would not catch 'em.*" On another occasion he missed some hounds after a long run in a wild country, and they were eventually lost. On some one condoling with him upon what most huntsmen would consider rather a serious bereavement, Scott replied with a smile, "Oh—it's nought worth thinking about; *it is a poor concarn that can't afford to lose a hound or two*.*" Here is philosophy for you, reader; "rough clad" if you like; but there is nothing like taking things coolly in this world. As Scott's List, however, only gives a sum total of thirty-five couples of working hounds, the concarn cannot afford many such trifling losses in the year.

* This reminds me of a story I heard of "Robert" somebody, formerly huntsman to the Northumberland hounds. A runaway horse dashed with his rider among the pack—"That's right, sir!" exclaimed Robert, "that's right—ride among em! kill a hound or two! we've plenty mair (more) at home!"

On Monday the 9th, by the kind attentions of Mr. James Blackwood, I was enabled to see some of the principle lions of Edinburgh—"The modern Athens," as this seat of learning and philosophy is now called; which certainly sounds better to the ear than the "modern Babylon," as our Metropolis is designated, chiefly by reason of its great extent. Holyrood Palace (with which most of my readers are, no doubt, so well acquainted, that a description of it would be to them "tedious as a thrice-told tale,") was our first object; from whence we proceeded to the High-school, a splendid building on the Calton-hill, and thence to the Register-office, which is out and out the most elegant public building I have ever yet seen in any country which I have visited; and very unlike some I could name, in which may be found

> "Windows and doors in nameless sculptures drest,
> With order, symmetry, or taste unblest;
> Forms like some bedlam statuary's dream,
> The craz'd creations of misguided whim."

We then walked into the Parliament-house that was—the Court of Session that is. In other words, we got amongst the lawyers, than which, they say, there is only one worse place in which a man can find himself. My chief object here was to have a sight of Lord Jeffreys, who did so much honour, not to fox-hunting, but to sound learning as well as the general literature of our country, when editor of the Edinburgh Review. And in truth he is well worth looking at, for a countenance or an eye more expressive of intellectual powers cannot I think be imagined. I forgot to ask before which of the three or four judicial big-wigs I saw this day sitting in the judgment-seat, Williamson once appeared as a witness in a horse cause, as thereon hangs rather an amusing tale. On being called on for his testimony, he put his spectacles on his nose, and pulling a large book (his hunting diary) out of

his pocket, began to read:—"the hounds met this day, my lord, at Haddon-rig, and we found our fox at ten minutes past eleven," when his lordship informed him that all extraneous matter might be dispensed with, and desired him to confine himself to facts.

I was my intention this day to have heard Professor Wilson lecture, but learning from Mr. Blackwood that he was indisposed with a cold, I thought it prudent to await a fitter opportunity. I finished the morning then with a lounge in Mr. Inglis's stables, which was rendered more than usually agreeable by meeting several of my sporting friends in them, who had arrived in Edinburgh to attend one of the periodical dinners of the Royal Caledonian Hunt Club. Amongst them was Mr. Campbell, of Saddel, who had seen a run that morning with the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds, and who, accompanied by his Grace, had ridden to Edinburgh after hunting—the distance just fifty miles. Nor was this all. Mr. Campbell rode the same number of miles the next morning to meet Lord Elcho's pack! So much for the charms of fox-hunting; but what other pastime would be purchased at such a sacrifice as this?

My notice of Edinburgh would be very incomplete, were I to pass over, without remark, this justly celebrated Club, of which the King is patron; and which consists of most of the noblemen and gentlemen now resident in Scotland. It was instituted in1777; and it appears that the oldest member of it is Mr. Baillie of Jerviswood—i.e., of Mellerstain, where he now resides.

I was given to understand that the funds of this club are very considerable, notwithstanding the numerous acts of beneficence which emanate from them; and the honour attached to an election to it is

shown by the number and rank of the several candidates. It undoubtedly towers far above all other hunting or racing clubs, perhaps I may venture to say, in Europe. The annual autumn meeting is held (having been first fixed upon by ballot) at different places in Scotland, when, as all your readers know, there is much excellent racing, and where the fox-hounds of the county attend. It was last year at Ayr, where those of Lord Kelburne attended; and, as I was informed by a friend who partook of it, showed some very good sport—" unusually good, indeed,"—were his words—" for that time of the year."

Like the fablers of antiquity, I wander from country to country; but, unlike them, I state nothing that I do not know, or have good reason to believe, to be true. I have already mentioned, that the result of my meeting Mr. Whyte Melville, at Chester-hall, was an invitation to his house in Fife, for the purpose of seeing the Fife-hounds; and I was also given to understand, that there were other houses in his neighbourhood whose doors would be open to receive me—amongst them that of Sir Ralph Anstruther, Bart., of Balcaskie, represented to me as just the sort of person I should like to visit—the well-bred, but unaffected country gentleman and sportsman, and keeping what is called an excellent house, in other words, a good larder and a good cook. But my first start from Edinburgh was to Mount Melville, and having sent my servant and horses forward on the Tuesday, I found myself on the morning of Wednesday (10th) seated, cum multis aliis, in a one-horse omnibus, a sort of " cruelty drag," which conveys passengers to the quay from which the Largo steam boat starts, that being the route marked out for me, and where I had appointed to meet Mr. Earle, who was also booked for Mount Melville.

The road may be termed the theatre of adventures; and I have oftentimes diverted myself with thinking that an amusing episode might have been the result of my having been acquainted with the history of all my fellow passengers, and there were some queer-looking ones amongst them, in this "cruelty-drag." Just, however, as the clock struck nine, —the precise hour of starting—the door opened to add one more to the number, and in stepped a stout but comely person, just in the prime of life, carrying a brown paper parcel in his hand of no inconsiderable size, out of one end of which popped the head of a wooden-horse, and out of the other his tail. "Ah," thought I within myself; "you are some happy man in the full enjoyment of domestic felicity"—(recollecting also at the moment that, about that time ten years, when on one of my tours, I was detected in the self-same act myself, although I was silly enough to feel ashamed of it)—"and are returning to your wife and children in the country, after a week's visit to the Metropolis." Now who should this fond father be, but the aforesaid Sir Ralph Anstruther, to whom I was, immediately on my arrival at the Quay, introduced by Mr. Earle, and who, after a pleasant trip of about twenty miles, was met on the opposite coast by his lady in her poney-phaeton with two beautiful greys, for the purpose of conveying him to Balcaskie. Mr. Earle and myself got into a "yellow post-chaise," and arrived at Mount Melville by dressing time—not, however, without a day having been fixed for our all meeting together at Balcaskie.

It is not necessary for me to say much more of Mr. Whyte Melville, at least of his private history, as from his having been several seasons at Melton Mowbray, he is very well-known to the sporting world. To the fashionable world he cannot be a stranger, for his manners and deport-

ment at once prove that they were formed and nurtured in that school; and his having married a sister of the Duke of Leeds is a voucher for my assertion. For a manager of a pack of fox-hounds no man can be fitter, for he is a good sportsman, a fine rider, and his very gentlemanlike conduct in the field makes him highly popular in the county.

The house of Mount Melville—built of a stone equal, to appearance, to that called Portland, or Bath, and standing on an eminence commanding a view of St. Andrew's and its beautiful bay,—at the desirable distance of three miles—has an imposing effect, and I consider it to exhibit the handsomest exterior of all I saw in Scotland. In its interior is every thing in keeping with the correct taste of the owner; and amongst its various decorations, is a magnificent picture over the sideboard in the dining-room, containing portraits of thirteen of Mr. Melville's horses and their riders, twelve of which, including himself, are ridden by distinguished Meltonians, whose likenesses are admirably preserved by the artist*. They are all going very well, and "best pace," over the finest part of Leicestershire, with the exception of one who has a fall and is being leaped over by Mr. Maxse, by way of a foil to the rest. He is supposed to be a snob, in a black collar, to distinguish him, no doubt, from the elite. The library is a small room for a house of this size, yet contains a lot of very valuable books, particularly in that department of literature called the Belles Lettres; but I should have passed this over had it not been for one individual circumstance. There lay upon the table, the last number of the New and of the Old Sporting Magazines, and the difference in the appearance of them consisted in something beyond the colours of the covers. The former had evidently been read throughout; the leaves of the latter were still uncut. "This was not

* Ferneley, of Melton.

the state in which the Sporting Magazine was wont formerly to be found, in a master's of fox-hounds house, towards the middle of the month," thought I, within myself, with feelings, I admit, nearer allied to pride than teeming with that indispensable virtue called charity!

Although I have called Mr. Melville a master of the Fife fox-hounds, he has a partner in the duties attending that honourable post, in Captain Wemyss, of Wemyss-castle, M. P. for the county, who manages the pecuniary part of the concern, leaving the affairs of the country, the fixtures, and the kennel, to Mr. Melville. And it is well he does so, for what with attractions of politics and other more serious, but I should imagine by no means more alluring, avocations, the captain only once took the field during either of my visits to Fife, nor do I believe that, fond as he appears to be of hunting, he enjoyed it half a dozen times during the season. The conflicting political interests, however, of this individual county appeared, as it were, to be tearing up society piece-meal, although, I must say, it is the only one in which I ever heard of politics preventing a man hunting in one part of it, but *not in another*; yet such was the case with Captain Wemyss, previously to his having been elected its representative.

On our voyage from Edinburgh to Largo, we passed within view of Wemyss-castle, and also of the residence of a quondam celebrated Meltonian—namely, Mr. Cristie of Dury, who I was sorry to hear had retired from the field in which he was so conspicuous, not only as a rider, but as a sportsman, and this upon a conscientious scruple. If he thinks fox-hunting is wrong, he is not wrong to discontinue it; but, for my own part, I see nothing in it that can hurt the soul, however the body may be affected by it, and I am ready to exclaim with Falstaff—

"If sack and sugar be a sin, God help us all." The Castle of Wemyss stands nobly, showing a majestic front; yet the tout-ensemble, to the eye, is spoiled by a most infernal-looking village that is below it; but like many other infernal places, apparently full of money or money's-worth—namely, coals and salt, (not Attic, I believe, as Cicero would say,) and therefore by no means to be sneezed at in these money-getting times. However to return to the owner of it, Captain Wemyss, a captain of his Majesty's navy, and from all I heard of him in private life, as straight-forward, as hospitable, and as honest a man as ever entered a cockpit (for which by the bye he must have been rather an inconvenient height, being certainly upwards of six feet without his shoes); and, although from only one day's observation of him in the field, I am unable to appreciate him as a sportsman—I may add, a hard rider to hounds, taking every thing that comes in his way, with the characteristic intrepidity of his profession. That he believes himself to be a sportsman, however, did not admit of a doubt from the various telegraphic signals that the huntsman received from him on the day I saw him in the field, during a most perplexing run of an hour, which, notwithstanding all things, ended in the death of the fox.

An expression of Horace's now crosses my path, and all but brings me to a check. It implies the difficulty of discriminating between what is fit, and what is not fit—"Quid decet, quid non"—in what we do or say, and especially so when we comment upon the doings or sayings of other people. But Captain Wemyss is a character—a good one I have acknowledged him to be—that must not be passed over by me in silence, and I am sure he will pardon a short notice of him here, particularly as he has already appeared in the pages of the New Sporting Magazine.

Although he has now been six years in his grave, "and to our purposes he lives no more," I cannot pass over a celebrated character connected with the Fife hounds—the late Tom Crane, their huntsman; and particularly so, as we were born and bred within nine miles of each other, and were both entered about the same time, to the same pack of fox-hounds—those of Sir Richard Puleston, to whom Crane's father was for many years butler, and afterwards, for the remainder of his life, steward. Here then was Tom's *debut*, or start as it may here perhaps be more technically denominated, and no bad one either. In the first place, his father was a very sensible and well conducted man in his situation of life, and the son had the benefit of good example. In the next, he was, we may say, cradled in a kennel, and in one of as good a judge of hounds, and of every thing appertaining to hunting, as England has hitherto produced. Lastly, no man in that part of the world had an establishment of such orderly, well trained servants as Sir Richard Puleston always had, and I may add, few servants have a kinder or more considerate master; but it is good masters alone that make good servants.

The history of Tom Crane is this:—When Sir Richard Puleston went to Ireland as Lieutenant-colonel of the Ancient British Fencibles—a light dragoon regiment, raised by Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart., and which greatly distinguished itself in the unfortunate Rebellion in Ireland, in 1798—he gave up his fox-hounds, pro-tempore, and Tom accompanied him as pad-groom, if such a term may be applied to a military gentleman's stable servant. And it was here he may be said first to have displayed that quickness and decision of character for which he was, through life, so conspicuous. In one of the several engagements

which this gallant little regiment took part in, a beautiful black mare called Priestess, the gift of the—by all sportsmen—ever-to-be-remembered Mr. Corbet, of Sundorne-castle, Shropshire, to Lady Puleston, his daughter, was shot dead under Sir Richard, and his life was greatly endangered by the circumstance. It being observed, however, by Tom Crane, who was in the rear, with a led horse, he dashed through the fire with him towards his master, and thus saved him from destruction. An act of this description was not likely, sooner or later, to go without its reward. The cause of Crane's quitting the service of Sir Richard I do not at this moment recollect; but he did quit it soon afterwards, and served as a private soldier in the late Peninsular war, under the Great Captain of the Age, although he was not long in the ranks, having become batman to Colonel Freemantle, of the Guards. When, however, a pack of fox-hounds was sent out to this great captain, Sir Richard exerted his influence in favour of his late servant, and he was appointed by the Duke of Wellington to hunt them. He hunted them, I understood, quite to the satisfaction of his noble master; and by way of showing that neither the change in his habits of life, nor the dissipation of a camp, had eradicated the good principles that his father had instilled into him, I am proud to record the following circumstance. Sir Richard showed me a letter from him to his father, which not only contained a most correct expression of his sentiments upon various other subjects, but highly creditable appeal to himself as to a step he was about to take. It appeared the hounds were about to be given up by the duke, and to be transferred to the possession of Lord Stewart. The purport of this appeal then was, to obtain the sanction of Sir Richard as to his (Crane's) continuing to hunt them, after his Grace gave them up. And here, as may be imagined, conflicting circumstances were at work.

Crane was aware that the duke was partial to him as a servant*, for, in delicate but not incomprehensible terms, he signified as much in his letter; and he likewise expressed his high regard for his Grace, as well as his gratitude for the favours he had received from him,—his discharge from the army one of them. But the fact was, Crane was still more partial to his hounds, and expressed a strong desire to go with them,—leaving, however, that point entirely to the decision of Sir Richard Puleston, with the assurance that, if he thought he ought *not* to quit the service of his Grace, nothing should tempt him to do so, unless it were his Grace's pleasure.

Crane, however, did go to Lord Stewart with the hounds; and several good anecdotes are related of him in Fife, during his career with his lordship, as well as that with the duke. Amongst them, the following may not be thought unworthy of being recorded. During the Peninsular war, the opposing armies were in front of each other, but no active operations going on. Of course the line of demarcation between them was drawn out, and Crane was told of the consequences that might be the result, if his ardour in following his hounds led him within the enemy's lines. It, however, did one day lead him within them, being determined to follow his hounds; nor did he retire until two shots were fired at him by the videts! So much for the enthusiasm of a sportsman. On another occasion, when with Lord Stewart, he was told he ought not to ride before the King of France, (Charles X.) with whose hounds he was in the

* On peace being restored, the duke took Crane into his service again, and he had the care of his Grace's stud, then kept at Hatfield, in Herts, with permission to ride them whenever he liked. It was here that he married his wife, a daughter of the Marquess of Salisbury's steward; but preferring hunting to following hounds, he applied for and procured the situation of huntsman to the Fife pack.

field as an amateur. Some high park hurdles, however, presenting themselves, and none of the field appearing inclined to leap them, Crane charged them, and got to the hounds. At the first check, he found himself in the custody of two gens d'armes!

Perhaps the boldest turn that can be given to oratorical elocution is that called prosopopœia, inasmuch as it opens tombs, raises the dead, and makes even heaven and earth to speak. The delusion, however, vanishes when the orator becomes silent, and there is no power that can raise poor Crane from the tomb. I wish, however, I could represent him to my readers, as he was represented to me in Fife; but as I cannot do that, I must be content with progressing quietly with his history, mixed up as it is with that of the Fife hounds.

Crane commenced as huntsman to the Fife hounds—having succeeded Luke, considered very inefficient—in the year 1821, and had many trying difficulties to contend with. The amount of the subscription had fallen off; the country was bare of foxes, so much so, as in his first season's hunting to have produced fifteen blank days before Christmas; and, as a natural consequence, the hounds were become slack in the extreme. To almost any man but Crane, these difficulties would have been considered insurmountable; but having learnt in the service of the Duke of Wellington to consider difficulties as trifles, he set to work, nothing daunted, to overcome them; and was proceeding rapidly in making his hounds what they ought to be, when a new obstacle presented itself. A few years previous to his entering upon this task, Lord Kintore had made a junction of his kennel with that of the Fife, on condition that he should claim fifteen couples of hounds (of course each party picking hound for hound, in the draft,) whensoever he might be

disposed to set up another pack for himself. The claim being made by his lordship, was of course another damper, causing a diminution of the subscription; and Crane was told that he could only be allowed one, instead of two whippers-in, and this in a country abounding with all sorts of riot. But Crane was neither to be damped nor foiled. He had become attached to the country, still more so to his employers, and so far from being cast down by adverse circumstances, he doubled his efforts to overcome them, and he did overcome them at last. But, as a great admirer of his said to me in Scotland, "one of Crane's eyes was worth two of most other men's, any day in the week, in the field; and his ear was as true as his eye was quick."

Crane's career in Fife was brilliant, but unfortunately short. It commenced, as I have already said, in 1821, and ended in 1830, when his health became seriously affected; and during the long frost of that year he died of inflammation of the lungs. But it will be long before his name dies in Fife, or in the other counties in Scotland in which he was known. In fact, sportsmen, and, indeed, many others, appeared me, to retain an unusually pleasing remembrance of "poor Crane," and his memory is cherished to somewhat of an extraordinary extent. His funeral was attended by most of the gentlemen of the hunt, and the principal ones among them were his pall bearers. Thus, reader, may death be seen to confer, as well as level, distinction; and if it cannot be said of Crane, that he was, like Daniel, favoured of God, he was undoubtedly honoured by men.

There is one line of Homer admirably translated by Pope:—

> "What honours mortals after death receive,
> Those unavailing honours we may give."

But the honours given to Crane, by the gentlemen of the Fife hunt, were neither unavailing nor empty ones. They settled an annuity of fifty pounds per annum on his widow, for her life, and she still resides at Cupar Angus, where the principal Fife kennel is situated.

I regret to perceive, that in your number for February last you forestalled me in the insertion of the excellent monody upon this celebrated huntsman, from the pen of Mr. Carnegie; but I must request their re-insertion here, and for these particular reasons. First, my notice of his character and death would not be complete without them, as they so truly mark the peculiar features in the one, and the regret shown for the other; and, secondly, they were extracted by me from the album of a lady, a friend of the author, and a great friend to fox-hunting.

"So merry Tom Crane is departed at last,
The grim huntsman has him run to ground;
No more shall we listen his soul-stirring blast,
Or hark to him cheering the hound!

"He is gone to his slumbers; but long, for old Tom,
Every sportsman must feel a regret;
In field and in kennel supremely at home—
Methinks that I see him e'en yet!

"His weather-beat visage—his game-looking eye—
His top-boots dark coloured, but bright;
In his left hand his whip, planted firm on his thigh,
And the loose-shaking rein in his right.

"He is gone; but while hunter shall follow the hound,
While lasts the prime joy of the plain,
No sportsman shall bound to the soul-stirring sound,
Without heaving a sigh for old Crane!"

It appears from these lines, that there were peculiarities about his person as well as his seat on his horse. As regarded the former, he was cleanly to an extreme for a person in his situation, and especially observant of the colour of his breeches and boot-tops, which was dark, but with a strong polish on the latter. His address was remarkably good, and there was something in his general demeanour that would have led a stranger to suppose, that there was a cross of good blood in his veins —in short, that he was the son of a gentleman, instead of a gentleman's steward. As a horseman, he was super-excellent; and yet, he was what is called a left-handed horseman, (although in fact *not a left-handed* horseman, which every man is taught to be, and what nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand are,) for he held his horse with his right hand, and his whip in his left*. But he rode with a peculiarly light hand, and had a curious, I might say unique, method of shaking the reins of his bridle, when going up to a large fence, which no doubt his horse knew the meaning of. He was, I have reason to believe, a very quick man over a country.

But desirable as quickness, both of thought and deed, may be in huntsmen, there is one evil attends it when carried to an extreme; *they expect their whippers-in to be equally quick as themselves*, and such I understood was Crane's case. Some rather amusing stories, indeed, are afloat in Fife, as regards him and his men in the field. For example—Tom Batters, now first whip to the Fife—and a capital one he is—also whipped-in to Crane, but it was young days with him then. After one or two good ratings from him, on one occasion, administered rather quickly in succession, the following soliloquy was overheard

* A coachman who holds the reins in his right, and the whip in the left hand, is called a left-handed coachman.

from poor Tom, as he was trotting to a point, round the cover. "It's d—n my eyes, if I go here; and it's d—n my eyes if I go there; and d—n my eyes if I knows where to go." This will remind my readers of Williamson's speech about his terriers, and Sir David Baird's comment upon it.

I should never have written my Letters on the Condition of Hunters, had there been a hope, that in these days of education, some intelligent groom might have taken up his pen on the subject; but there was none who considered himself equal to the humble task. Now the *observations and experiences* of such men as Crane or Williamson, on fox-hunting, would prove a treasure to the sporting world—indeed, what is the Book of Proverbs, if we look at it as mere human writing, but a collection of such-like valuable materials, although upon a very different subject. Desirous then of obtaining some of the results of Crane's practical experience of hunting, and every thing belonging to hounds, Lord Kintore showed me a few observations of his own, in manuscript, of which he had sent him a copy, with a request that he would make his comments upon them without reserve, but the request was made in vain. I remember being much pleased with the unassuming little preface, by which his lordship introduced his remarks to the notice of Crane, and it was, as near as I can recollect, this:—"To Thomas Crane—from one who has seen and learnt a little, but who has yet a deal to learn from those who have had longer experience than himself. The writer* would feel obliged to Crane, to add his own remarks to the enlosed, on any part of the noble science of fox-hunting."

The following passage also attracted my notice, and I believe I can

* Of course, Crane knew who the writer was.

give it pretty correctly:—"I like a burst of twenty minutes, and I do *admire* a real hunting run of an hour, at a fair holding pace, when every hound does his share of work; and *then*, to find them increasing their pace by degrees—your fox sinking before them, and running at last from scent to view. This is a pleasure to be felt, but not to be conceived." I was pleased by the distinction between "liking" and "admiring;" there is enthusiasm in the latter, which should be inseparable from fox-hunting; and no one can doubt Lord Kintore having his full share of that quality, what pursuit soever he may engage in.

The Fife hounds originally hunted the greater part of the counties of Fife and Forfar, but were turned out of Forfar, in consequence of the splitting of the pack, diminution of subscription, &c. They, however, found a new country in Perthshire, and in the best part of Fife, in which they have a kennel, at a place called Torryburn. It is called the "West of Fife" country, and affords excellent sport. A short time before I visited Mount Melville, the hounds had been enjoying a succession of diversion in it—namely, nine good runs in eleven days! They had another, a third kennel, at Lord Kinnaird's, (at Inchture,) but which has been given up in consequence of their having hunted Forfarshire, since Mr. Dalyell left it. Lord Kinnaird, indeed, who, my readers will remember, undertook the management of the Quorn country for Sir F. Holyoke Goodricke, during part of the first season after the late Sir Harry Goodricke's death, has now a pack of his own, having for his confederate, Lord Duncan, son of the Earl of Camperdown.

I must now describe the first day's sport with the Fife hounds, having hitherto proceeded no further in it than my introduction to Captain Wemyss, at the gate, which, however, may be classed under the

head of *sport*. But to be serious, the doings of this day in the field are well worthy of being recorded, and were highly interesting to me from the fact of its having been the first time of my seeing another crack huntsman in the field—the "Merry John Walker," as Lord Kintore calls him—the said John Walker having been promoted to the situation of huntsman to the Fife, from that of first whipper-in to his lordship.

Now then to business, and this day (December 11th) might be actually termed a day of business, for we ran a leash of foxes—one to ground, and the other two to death. But the last fox was just the fox I wanted, for he was the most shuffling, dodging, short-running, puzzling devil, in that shape, that ever presented himself to my notice before, and it might almost appear, having for his object the putting the merits of both hounds and huntsman to the test. I am quite sure he never ran half a mile in any one direct line, nor did I ever see a fox turn so many times, *short back*, as he did. Neither was he content with all this—he ran amongst buildings, tried lime-kilns, appeared to look out for fallows, in short, he tried every expedient a fox could try to baffle hounds and save his life. But all would not do; at the end of one hour and fifteen minutes close hunting, with only one view holloa*, and *no horn*, "Merry John" and his pack ran into him, in view, to the great satisfaction of a rather numerous field, one of whom was a master of a neighbouring pack. And it was high time he should do so, for it being half-past three o'clock when Reveller first spoke to him in the cover, it was become nearly too dark to ride over the fences before we killed him. It was altogether a slow thing, but at times a fine test of hounds, and on my congratulating the captain on the *finale*, we exchanged a shake of the hand. I rode a

* Having heard the pack turn short in a cover, I rode quickly back to the lower end of it, and viewing him away, the second whip and myself gave the office.

perfectly made hunter, called Duncan, sent to cover for me by Captain Peter Hay of Mugdrum, but who, unfortunately, went home after we had killed the second fox.

The mention of this *second* fox reminds me of a circumstance that redounds to Walker's credit. Just before he died, he was viewed by a farmer, who gave a slight holloa, but not of that nature likely to be understood by hounds. "No holloaing," cried Walker, (I was close to him at the moment,) "if they can't kill him without that, let him live." Observe—*capping for the men is allowed with the Fife hounds;* and it was now getting late in the day for the chance of finding another fox.

The master of fox-hounds of whom I have spoken as having been in the field on this day, was Mr. Dalyell, then at the head of the Forfarshire hounds, but now, as your readers know, of the Puckeridge, in every respect a worthy successor of the much lamented Mr. Hanbury. Mr. Dalyell was on a visit to his brother-in-law, Sir Ralph Anstruther, (whose sister he married,) and having been previously introduced to his character as a sportsman and a gentleman, I was gratified at being made known to him personally.

But I must hark back to the captain, as this was the first and last time of my seeing him. Of the captain's oratorical exhibitions on the hustings, some excellent anecdotes are "afloat," as he himself would say. Having gone to sea at the age of eleven years, when he could but just write his name, and having received no other education than that which he got on board a man of war—no great shakes, I believe, in those days—the flowers of oratory were, he said, (in a speech at Cupar,) not to be expected from him. Yet there *is* a language which, like the poet's

beauty, when "unadorned is adorned the most"—a style of speaking admirably adapted to the refined taste of a radical mob, and that style is the captain's. Now then for a specimen. "I say, captain," cried one of the unwashed to him, under the hustings, whilst undergoing the catechising which those gentry are now prone to inflict on all such as solicit the honour of representing them in a certain place; "How do you mean to vote about the bishops?" "Hold your tongue, you ——-," roared the captain, "what do *you* know about bishops?" "I say, captain," bawled another of the unclean; "are you for annual elections?" "No—you d—d fool," replied the captain, "nor would you be for them, *if you had to pay for them.*" Now, if not the honesty, there is the bluntness of the sailor in both these replies; and, strange to say, the rhetoric of a Cicero would have no chance against such eloquence as this, with the class of persons to whom it was addressed. Indeed, the captain himself furnishes the proof, forasmuch as he is popular amongst the οι πολλοι, and, I am told, has a peculiar manner of initiating himself into their favour. For example: Suppose he wanted one of his constituents to open a gate for him, or hold his horse, he would address him thus:—"Come here, you ten-pound radical rascal, and open this gate." All this appears strange at first sight, but unaccountable as it may seem to be, there is something in it that *takes*, and I can produce a striking instance of its persuasive power. A few years back, a common sailor brought an action (at Lancaster, I believe,) against a captain of a merchant-ship, for ill usage on the voyage, when, on its appearing to have been the second time of his having subjected himself to it, he was naturally enough interrogated by the judge as to his reasons for again sailing with such an inhuman captain? "Why, please your honor," said Jack, "I warn't for sailing with him again, but I couldn't help it; *the captain had such winning ways with him.*" "Winning

ways," observed his lordship; "what do you mean by winning ways?" "Why please you, my lord," resumed Jack, "the captain comes alongside me, on the quay, slaps me on the back, and says—What! Jack—you d—d ill-looking, blear-eyed, squinting ———, ar'nt you a going to sail again along with me? Please your honor, my lord, I could'nt help it arter all that there kind discourse."

Of Captain Wemyss's power of voice I have already spoken, and I should think it seldom needed the aid of the trumpet, even on the quarter deck. Indeed, his chairman at the Cupar dinner—in allusion, perhaps, to his speaking the sentiments of his constituents—pronounced the captain to be "no whisperer, even in a drawing room;" but the following anecdote, related to me by one who was a party concerned in it, will plainly show, that the captain speaks out every where. My informant and himself, it appeared, were one Sunday in the same pew, in the most aristocratic church in all London. "I say, Melville*," said the captain, loud enough to be heard by half the congregation at least, "*that's a d—d dandified looking fellow; is he not?*" Mr. Melville dropped as if he had been shot, and was some time ere he could venture to raise his head. But, reader! Who do you imagine this "d—d dandified looking fellow" to have been? why no other than the parson who had just settled himself in the pulpit, ready to commence his discourse, a time at which, of all others, the greatest silence generally prevails in churches! Speaking out in a church, however, is no great novelty—Sir Roger de Coverley to wit, who would let no one sleep during the sermon but himself, calling to them with an audible voice if they did; and it is written of the celebrated Lord Sackville, of former days, who is said to have gone every Sunday to church at the head of his whole establishment,—"leaving only a sentinel

* Not Mr. Whyte Melville.

to watch the fires at home, and mount guard upon the spits," that he would occasionally throw his tongue in church; and once to the amusement of his hearers. Wishing to encourage a young declaimer in the pulpit, he was not content with nodding assent to several passages that struck him, but at last cried out in ecstasy,—" *Well done, Harry* !*" Then again—"The preacher seems a very ungainly person," whispered Mannering (Guy) to his friend. "*Never fear,*" replied the latter, "*he is the son of an excellent Scotch lawyer; he'll show blood, I'll warrant him.*" These are the graphic words of Scott, when giving a vivid picture of a celebrated character of his day; but it is to be hoped the whispers of neither party reached quite so far as the pulpit, from which "the still small voice of reason" ought to whisper to us.

With the captain's politics I have no right to find fault. He is an out and out radical; on principle, I conclude. The celebrated Tom Pye, however, (of the Edinburgh mail,) says, the captain's politics remind *him* of the clock at York, (Janique bifrontis imago!) but why, or wherefore, I leave Tom to explain. It certainly does appear that the captain was bred and reared in the *Tory* school, as his chairman acknowledged at the Cupar dinner; and whether, like too many of his kidney, he became so stout a radical as he now is, from a feverish appetite for popularity and distinction, or from a sincere conviction—far the more probable of the two—that he is thus more signally benefiting his country, is not for me to hazard an opinion upon here. But I greatly admire his laconic answers to the questions of the "unwashed." No government, nor scarcely any human institution, ever yet existed, but what was censured and opposed; but neither errors nor faults can justify an appeal to a rabble, who cannot possibly judge of what they cannot possibly under-

* Rev. Henry Eatoff.

stand; whose opinions are not propagated by reason, but caught, like the small-pox, by contagion.

Friday the 12th being a non-hunting day, I rode to Cupar to see the kennel and the whole establishment, and to have half an hour's chat with Walker. The kennel is close to the town, and yet not inconvenienced by its vicinity to it, no thoroughfare being near; and it is equal to the accommodation of the pack, which does not exceed forty couples; and it also has the advantage of being healthy. The stables likewise are adjoining; rather so-so in appearance, and their contents more useful than ornamental. Indeed, I should not say the Fife servants are well mounted; but the lacerating nature of the stone with which the greater part of the Fife walls are erected—a sort of whin, or slate stone—is a damper to the purchasers of high-priced horses, as a walk through these stables would show. There is, however, no lack of strength. The men have four horses a-piece, about the average number, but some of them must always be out of work, from the circumstance to which I have alluded—namely, the cutting nature of the stone. Walker's favourite horse was a low, but very thick, chestnut, purchased out of a Highland drove, for the sum of thirty pounds—a most extraordinary animal for his size. He is, —or perhaps I should write, *was*, for he had awfully looking legs, rather rounder than mill-posts, when I last saw him—an admirable fencer, with fully sufficient pace, and as stout as steel; and although, of course, nothing can be known of his blood, his skin denotes that he has not many blots in his escutcheon. The switch tail is the order of the day in this stable, which is a great disfigurement in horses not in tip-top condition; and that of the Fife stud is but of the middling order. I think the captain, who orders these matters, puts too much faith in Dr. Green.

The Fife hounds, as will be seen by the list, have been bred with great care, and without regard to trouble in going from home for blood. And, unlike the man's razors, meant only for sale, they are drafted with an eye to business, and not to please the eye. They are not a show pack—not an even lot—but with the exception of Climbank, Limner, and one or two other plainish hounds, but too good to be drafted*, they are such as all sportsmen must be pleased with. They stand well on their legs; I do not indeed recollect to have seen one faulty in this very material respect for all rough countries; and there are many very perfectly formed hounds in the pack, for example, Reveller, Brevity, Milliner, Lavish, Caroline, Caution, Nosegay, Melody, Dauntless, and Belfray —the last named bitch quite perfection in my eye for the Fife country—short legged, and good in all her acting parts. Dauntless is likewise a most valuable bitch; I saw her one day guide the scent through the horses in a style very rarely equalled.

Some seasons back, in 1827 I believe, this kennel received a great acquisition in a present to Crane, from his old master, Sir Richard Puleston, of two stallion hounds, viz. Mulciber and Comus, the latter by his Lucifer, out of his Cowslip. There was only one Mulciber hound in work when I was in Fife, but the Comus hounds are and have been all clever and good. Among the nine couples of young hounds also, are several of the right sort—Ajax and Archer (brothers) for example; Merlin, Marplot, Boxer, &c. &c. But of all the blood-thirsty animals I ever saw in the shape of a fox-hound, I never witnessed any to be compared with these two brothers, who not satisfied with the lion's

* Climbank and Limner are capital workers, got by Lord Kintore's Rubicon, who, Walker says, *never did wrong*.

share, appeared to consider the fox to be *all their own;* and, it appeared, they carry some of their savage propensities into the kennel. On my speaking of them, one day, to Walker, he said that Ajax could turn the feeder out of the kennel whenever he liked to do so. He is a hound of superior strength and size, and, like his namesake of old, who made the Trojans tremble, and even Hector look queer, on that account fearless.

I have heard many people say—"fox-hounds are fox-hounds; there is but little difference in the appearance of one pack and another,"—meaning of course long established packs. Indeed! Now I will admit that there is a closer resemblance between hound and hound, and greyhound and greyhound, in form and colour, than between any other kind of dog familiar to our eye; but I positively deny the above assertion, and need go no further than the kennel I am speaking of in support of the same. There is in it a bitch called Bluebell, (not in the List, for she is stone blind, from cataracts in both eyes) from the Belvoir kennel. Now I would give Walker, or any other huntsman in England, the chances of three crosses, and challenge him to produce a fox-hound of similar shape, appearance, and symmetry to this Belvoir bitch. Although far from faultless, she is altogether a splendid animal of her sort, and an entire pack, all like her, would be such a sight as the world never has seen, neither is it ever likely to see. She exhibits the very ultra extent of high breeding in the fox-hound; in other words the nearly astounding length to which the presumption of man has carried him, in improving upon the works of his Maker.

A LIST OF THE FIFE FOX-HOUNDS.

1835.

Ages. Years.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
Seven.	Champion.	Sir R. Puleston's Mulciber.	His Caroline
Six...	Prudence.	Mr. Foljamb's Piper.	Lord Yarborough's Columbine
	Smasher...	Smasher.....	Rival
	Songstress.	Ditto	Ditto
	Monarch ..	Ditto	Madcap
	Music.....	Ditto	Ditto
	Brilliant...	Bustard	Rakish
	Lavish. ...	Mr. Chalmers' Lucifer.....	Lord Yarborough's Favourite
	Melody....	Mountain	Mr Chalmers' Watchful
Five..	Lady.....	Bustard.....	Loyalty
	Coaxer. ...	Sir R. Puleston's Comus....	Merrylass
	Curious....	Ditto	Ditto
	Rantaway..	Sportsman.....	Ruby
	Boaster....	Sultan.....	Blowsy
	Favourite ..	East Lothian Chronicle	Lord Yarborough's Favourite
	Milliner. ..	Mr. Chalmers' Latimer	Mr. Lambton's Margery
	Topper	Lord Yarborough's Platoff ..	His Trophy
Four...	Constant ..	Sir R. Puleston's Comus....	Darling
	Comedy ...	Ditto	Ditto
	Caution....	Ditto Champion	Modish
	Flourisher.	Lord Yarborough's Fairplay.	His Wanton
	Tempest...	Mr. Chalmer's Finder.....	Mr. Hodgson's Tempest
	Racket	Sir R. Puleston's Comus....	Rakish
	Ranter....	Lord Middleton's Pontiff....	His Racket
	Belfray	Colonel Windham's Bellman.	Mr. Nicoll's Willing
	Nosegay ..	Sir R. Sutton's Watchman...	His Nelly
	Bluebell ..	Sir. T. Syke's Splendour....	His Bluebell
	Sprightly ..	Lord Yarborough's Shiner...	Songstress
	Vanguard .	Beaufort Victor..... ...	Mr. Assheton Smith's Blemish
	Rochester..	Beaufort Rutland	Out of Lord Kintore's Whimsey
Three .	Chronicle ..	Chronicle.....	Merrylass
	Chanter....	Ditto	Ditto
	Cottager...	Ditto	Ditto
	Cheerful...	Ditto	Ditto
	Duster....	Lord Yarborough's Chorister	Darling
	Daphne ..	Lord Yarborough's Darter...	Loyalty

Ages. Years.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
Three	Dauntless	Ditto	Ditto
	Regent	Mr. Hay's Hotspur	Rally
	Bertram	Lord Yarborough's Bowler	His Glory
	Reveller	Lord Yarborough's Darter	Rakish
	Bravery	Lord Kintore's Bustler	Susan
Two	Striver	Sailor	Comfort
	Saladin	Ditto	Ditto
	Roundelay	Jupiter	Rally
	Ruby	Ditto	Ditto
	Climbank	Lord Kintore's Rubicon	Curious
	Caroline	Ditto	Ditto
	Brevity	Lord Kintore's Bustler	Comical
	Bonnylass	Ditto	Ditto
	Bruiser	Lord Kintore's Bruiser	His Welcome
	Pontiff	Lord Kintore's Pontiff	His Rosemary
	Limner	Lord Kintore's Rubicon	Lavish
	Lively	Ditto	Ditto
	Gaylass	Mr. Ramsay's Gulliver	Melody
	Blucher	Lord Yarborough's Druid	His Boundless
One	Ajax	Auditor	Comfort
	Archer	Ditto	Ditto
	Auditor	Ditto	Ditto
	Boxer	Duke of Buccleuch's Boxer	Lavish
	Dexter	Bertram	Darling
	Driver	Ditto	Ditto
	Darymaid	Ditto	Ditto
	Marplot	Lord Harewood's Guilder	Milliner
	Minister	Ditto	Ditto
	Milkmaid	Ditto	Ditto
	Glancer	Ditto	Nosegay
	Graceful	Ditto	Ditto
	Chantress	Lord Scarborough's Millwood	Chantress
	Stately	Sailor	Favourite
	Millwood	Lord Scarborough's Millwood	Racket
	Merlin	Lord Middleton's Marplot	Makeless
	Senator	Smasher	Margery

Old Hounds	27½	Couples.
Young Hounds	9	Ditto.
Total	36½	Couples.

Walker has a neat and comfortable house within less than a hundred yards of his darlings—no man alive is fonder of his hounds than he is—where himself and Mrs. Walker sojourn comfortably together. His parlour is very neatly furnished, and, as may be supposed, embellished with some of the insignia of the chase. Amongst them is a silver hunting horn, the gift of the Earl of Kintore, with an inscription that must be grateful to the feelings of the owner of it, being the testimony of a master to the good conduct of a servant; and also a picture of the bitch Lavish, in chase, a very good likeness of her. She is by Mr. Chalmers' Lucifer, out of Lord Yarborough's Favourite, and the dam of Limner and Lively, by Lord Kintore's Rubicon; and of Boxer, by the Duke of Buccleuch's Boxer, a very elegant young hound. Walker's wages are a hundred and forty guineas a year, which, with cap money, draft hounds, and other little et ceteras, make up a comfortable income—but not a shilling more than a man is deserving of, who does his duty in the situation in which he is placed, and risks his neck so many days in the year, for the amusement of his employers and their friends.

I have, I believe, before acknowledged the difficulty of making parallel of men who shine in the same sphere, neither could I, if disposed to it, compare Walker as a huntsman with Crane, because I never saw the latter in that capacity at all. But I cannot pass over Walker, were it only from the very high character that had been given to me of him by so many, and those well able to appreciate it, previously to my seeing him in the field. Indeed I consider it but justice to give praise where praise is due, and so far from its being injurious to persons in his (Walker's) situation in life, it must have a direct contrary effect—it must act as an incentive to good conduct, if it were only to preserve the good name already acquired. I can in fact here speak from my own personal

feelings. The love of admiration may be a weakness, but it is a weakness inseparable from our nature, and any thing but unfavourable to our future exertions to attain it. In short, logically speaking, the desire of praise is nothing less than a motive to do that which we think may deserve praise.

Now if I may use such an expression, Walker's good name appears to be "potted" in Fife. He is not only one of the most civil, unassuming men in his station in life that I ever came across, but taking into consideration the few years experience he has had in that station, he has shown himself to have been almost miraculously gifted. In the "observations" Lord Kintore sent to Crane for his perusal, he said, "a huntsman's talent (like the poet's) must be born with him." The happy association then is self-apparent in Walker, and when that talent becomes to be still more improved by experience, and still more chastened by judgment, I do not hesitate in giving it as my opinion that he will make as perfect a huntsman as ever holloaed to a hound. He has every qualification for his art. He has the eye of a hawk; the quickness of a Shaw, without his rashness; the judgment of an old man, although a young one, for he is in the prime of his years; and when I say he has the zeal and enthusiasm of a Kintore, I think I have said enough. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard," sums up the moral of rather a long fable.

As a horseman, Walker is also pre-eminent, although now and then a little regardless of, or, perhaps, I should say, a little too severe on, his horses. But he will be "with 'em," if there is any go left in his nag; and hence he derives a great advantage over his fox, which I have reason to believe seldom escapes him with a fair scent, and provided he will stay above ground. But the numerous open drains in Fife and Forfar

save the lives of half the foxes that are hunted, and may be said to mar half the sport of a season. On this subject I shall have a word to say at another time.

I must not, however, dismiss the character of John Walker, as huntsman to the Fife hounds, without the following remark, in qualification, as it were, of the almost extravagant praise I have bestowed upon it. Without any disparagement of his zeal and talent, but merely to account for his almost unequalled success, it must not be forgotten that he stepped into his situation at a most favourable period—just in the nick of time, it may be said, to derive the advantage of his predecessor Crane's equally zealous and highly effective exertions in making a country, and reforming a pack of hounds. On the other hand, there is an acknowledged disadvantage in immediately appearing after a well graced actor, on any stage, and this must be placed to Walker's credit.

I saw an average statement of the expences of the Fife hounds (observe, they have three kennels) for the years 1830, 1831, amounting to £1468 14s. 6d. in the following disbursements.

Stable	£543	8	9
Kennel	316	13	7
Servants	419	0	9
Incidents, including £97 19s. 9d. for hounds purchased in the two years	189	11	5
	£1468	14	6

I considered Walker to be well assisted in the field. His first whip, Tom. Batters, is a good man with hounds, and no doubt all the better

for the blessings Crane bestowed upon him. The second, well bred for the situation, being a son of Smith the celebrated Brocklesby huntsman (Lord Yarborough's), has since left him. It was young days with him when I was in Fife, and unfortunately for human nature, judgment ripens slowly; but I liked what I saw of his performance, and there appeared to be nothing like riot about him. He must mind what he is at, however, for when I saw him in the kennel, I thought his jacket and breeches were a tight fit. I fear he will get heavy, which I should regret, being of opinion that some day or other he will signalize himself as a sportsman. I was given to understand, that his father only placed him under Walker by way of entering him to hounds, as the term is; and he could not well have chosen a better preceptor for him. He would teach him to be quick and decisive; and when experience and good judgment are united to quickness and prompt decision, a huntsman may be said to have arrived at a point very near to perfection.

Saturday 13th. From my visit to the kennel at Cupar, I proceeded to Balcaskie, where my friends from Mount Melville were engaged to meet me, and moreover the next morning's fixture was one of Sir Ralph Anstruther's covers. The house of Balcaskie is one of apparently very considerable antiquity—although replete with every comfort—having the gothic window, the tower-like staircase, and the flower garden, laid out in handsome parterres, divided by well trimmed yew hedges, after the fashion of our fore-fathers, with the advantage of a beautiful terrace the entire length of the house, which overlooks the whole, furnishing to the eye a most agreeable prospect. And as if it were in keeping with this old fashioned mansion, its yew hedges, its gothic windows, and its tower-like staircase, there is to be seen at Balcaskie a very good fashion to which I would reluctantly apply the epithet

"old." This is—a young couple, whose means would allow of their entering into the dissipation of either metropolis, enjoying by preference the endearing familiarities of domestic life, together with the pleasures of the country; and finding, in themselves, the reciprocal cause of mutual happiness. Depend upon it, reader, they are right. The atmosphere of the one abounds with taint and corruption, in which the heart shrinks and withers like a blighted flower; whereas in the pure and uncontaminated tranquillity of the other, it flourishes and continues to expand to delight*.

After a most agreeable evening, heightened by the exquisite performance of Lady Anstruther on the harp, and a good night's rest, I arose the next morning in the anxious expectation of a day's sport with "merry John" and his pack, as also of another day's experience of the captain in the field, which I assure you, reader, is no small treat. But, alas, politics—accursed politics—absolutely becoming the bane of society, and now even showing its ugly face in the hunting field, would not allow of his being out on this day, nor did I ever again see him with hounds.

It should, however, be made known, that it was just on the approach of his contest for the county, in which he beat his adversary, Colonel Lindsay, by I believe the largest majority that the annals of Scottish

* Having had the pleasure of meeting Sir Ralph Anstruther a few months back, at Mr. Dalyell's (his brother-in-law), in Hertfordshire, I was amused and gratified by the following anecdote. "I was much delighted," said Sir Ralph, "with your article on the Horse, in the Encyclopædia Britannica, and, exclusive of the pleasure the perusal of it gave me, I was a great gainer by the purchase of the volume which contained it, for the following reason:—I was, at that time, making some improvement in my old fashioned garden at Balcaskie, and availed myself of some excellent hints on that subject, given in an article on Horticulture, which immediately follows yours on the Horse."

elections can exhibit, and this in a year of unparalleled excitement, in that country. In fact Church and King had not a chance against the captain's broadside and his twenty-four (alias ten) pounders !

I regret my inability to give a flattering account of this day's proceedings in the field. In the first place, the fog was so thick in the morning, that Walker got lost in coming to cover with the hounds; and in the next, by some unaccountable accident, not one of Sir Ralph's foxes was at home—I say unaccountable accident, because, as may be supposed, Sir Ralph, although his covers abound with pheasants, is a strict preserver of these animals. We did find late in the day; but what with interruption from the fog, a drizzling rain and bad scent, we could do but little,—nothing in fact worth recording, although we were in what I call a very fair country for fox-hunting. But something always turns up in the hunting field to make amends for casual disappointments. There were staying at Balcaskie three young ladies*, first cousins to Sir Ralph, and well bred ones for this sport, being daughters of the late Mr. Anstruther Thompson, of Charlton, the original proprietor, as I have already stated, of the Fife hounds. One of these young ladies accompanied Lady Anstruther in her phaeton, and of course only now and then caught a sight of the hounds; but her sisters accompanied us throughout the day, and I must give them a niche in our Temple of Fame. But what if I could have placed them in your gallery of portraits ! I can assure you they would have afforded excellent subjects for the skill of your artist, as well as excellent samples of the bonnie lasses of old Scotland. Nevertheless, it is as regards their performance in the saddle alone that I venture to introduce the names of any young ladies

* One of these young ladies is since married.

to the notice of the sporting world; and perhaps had not the Miss Thompsons been the daughters of Mr Thompson of Charlton, I should have doubted the propriety of doing so by them. But I must say, I never saw two better horsewomen (I do not mean riders, because I know hundreds of good riders, as they are called, and elegant ones too, on perfectly broken-in horses); and "*horsewomen*" they must have been, to have ridden the nags on which they were mounted. They appeared all but, if not quite, thorough-bred, with ill-set on heads, very ticklish mouths, and very much inclined to play tricks; notwithstanding which, these young ladies were as much at home upon their backs as if they had been sitting on a drawing-room sofa. In short, on seeing them both going at nearly the top of their horses' speed, over some very rough ground, I could not help exclaiming to Mr. Dalyell, "Surely those young ladies have borrowed Sam Chifney's hands."

The Fife country. I scarcely saw enough of the Fife home country to offer a decided opinion upon it, and I did not see that called the "West Fife" at all, which is much the best, and which, as I have before said, has shown great sport*. Like most parts of Scotland the covers afford riot, the chief of which is roe; but I must say the Fife hounds are very steady in drawing, and at all other times. I only saw one hound *come out of cover*, with roe, when, although in view, he was stopped by Tom. Batters, by one single rate. The part of the country which I saw was far from objectionable, although the covers are nearer

* This West of Fife country afforded a capital run in the March month, after I quitted Scotland--from a moor near Queensferry. It was twelve miles, with scarcely a check; and so fast that only four of the field saw it. These were, Mr. Whyte Melville, Mr. John Grant, General Buccle, and Walker. By the bye, Mr. Editor, have I not omitted the mention of General Buccle in my notice of the party at Duns? He was out twice with Lord Elcho, during my visit to him, is a hard rider, and a sportsman, and was at Melton the last year of Mr. T. A. Smith's hunting the Quorn country.

to each other than may be agreeable; but it rode sound and well, and with horses used to the fences, a man may follow hounds pretty straight in it—that is to say, *if he can ride*, but it wont do for the "tailors." There may be bogs in it, and no doubt there are; but I saw none, and it is the only country in Scotland in which I did not get floored in one. It is the only country also in Scotland, or indeed elsewhere, in which I saw the roe-buck in his wild state; and I was anxious to see an animal of such poetical association—one who, like the stag, may be said to embellish the forest, and animate the solitude of his native wilds. Neither did he disappoint me; for, from the graceful freedom of his step, and the rapidity of his action—although not perhaps to be put in comparison with the "antlered monarch of the forest," when he first darts before the opening pack,—he realized the flattering allusions to his form and qualities by the various writers, both sacred and profane. One Ashael, for example, one of the three sons of Zeruiah—an active chap, no doubt—is said to be "as light of foot as a wild roe," in the description given us of a mortal skirmish, in the second book of Samuel; and even female grace and beauty in the human race have found similitude with the roe.

But these highly picturesque and poetical animals are very devils in the sight of huntsmen and their masters; for they not only leave a ravishing scent behind them, but they have the provoking propensity of describing a circle in their flight, so as often actually to overtake hounds that have been induced to follow them, and thus to make it more difficult to get them stopped. For this reason, they have been so seldom thought worthy of being considered beasts of chase; and, with one exception*,

* The late Mr. Pleydell, of Whatcombe-house, Dorsetshire, kept a pack until his decease, which took place a few years back. Xenophon mentions chasing the roe, by horsemen—on thorough-bred horses no doubt! See Percy's Rel. Anc. Eng. Poetry.

roebuck hounds have long been discontinued in England. Indeed the last English roe-buck was said to have been killed by "one Squire Whitfield, of Whitfield, in Northumberland," and I am quite sure all the fox-hunters in Scotland would be very glad to see another "Squire Whitfield" among them, if he could perform a like act. There would then be no occasion for the use of the very unfoxhunting-like rate of "Ware haunch." "Ware hare" is quite enough.

Sunday the 14th, was passed as that day is usually passed in the houses of country gentlemen,—namely, with that respect which is its due; and at an early hour on the following morning, Sir Ralph Anstruther's carriage was at the door to take himself, myself, and Mr. Dalyell to meet the Forfarshire fox-hounds, of which Mr. Dalyell was at that time the owner, at Gregstone-toll-bar, about seven miles on the Forfar side of Dundee, and nearly thirty from where we then were The cause, however, of this early start was, the necessity of being at the Dundee ferry at the precise time the steam boat passes the Tay, and we did but just nick it. A good breakfast awaited us at the inn in Dundee, and we proceeded to the place of meeting in post chaises.

According with my usual practice, on my first appearance with hounds in a country which is new to me, I shall offer some remarks upon Forfarshire; and it is particularly entitled to the notice of sportsmen from the fact of its having been the scene of fox-hunting in very early days. William the Lion, Alexander the Second, and Alexander the Third, all Kings of Scotland, hawked and hunted over it, and the one last named held his court at the palace of Forfar nearly half the year, for the purpose of sporting over the county. In what state it then was as to enclosures, or agriculture, I am unable to conjecture, but it is now said to

contain 340,000 acres of arable land, and appeared to me to be the most roomy *enclosed* county, if such an expression may be allowed me, that I hunted over in Scotland. It has been regularly hunted by fox-hounds about eighty years. Lord Kintore hunted it twice, and the renowned Captain Barclay of Ury once; and it is from their experience I speak as much as from my own. It has an advantage over Fife in the nature of the stone with which the walls are built, which seldom lacerates, and, generally speaking, it holds a fair scent—I may perhaps say more than an average scent for a ploughed country, which the greater portion of the enclosed part of it is. This may in part be accounted for by the fact, that, by the universal law of nature, all mountainous countries, like Scotland, accumulate much moisture, so that the surface of the fallows do not become arid and scentless, as they do in the flatter but exposed countries of England, during the prevalence of high and cold winds. But all "walled countries," as they are called, are objectionable, it being injurious to hounds to jump off from them, which they do with great violence when their fox is sinking before them—the time of all others when they are less able to withstand the force of the shock they sustain by it. It is true there are many—perhaps too many—large woods in Forfarshire, but there are whin covers in it that would do credit to any shire.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that Mr. Dalyell at this time, as at the present, hunted his hounds himself, assisted in the kennel as well as in the field by John Skinner, his first whipper-in, a name very well known in the fox-hunting world. There are three brothers, all at present with hounds, and the father of them, brought up by the late Mr. Meynell at Quorn, was fifty-five years with fox-hounds, without once being absent from them, with the exception of the period of nineteen weeks, when he was confined to his bed by a fall. One of his sons

also had an awful fall some years back, by which an arm and thigh were fractured; and Tom. Skinner, now huntsman to Mr. De Burgh's stag-hounds, whom I knew in Warwickshire, when he whipped-in to Mr. Hay, met with a sad accident last winter in the field, from which I much fear he is not yet recovered. His foot was dreadfully crushed by his horse falling upon it, and either by ill-treatment or neglect, the wound was suffered to mortify. "If any body can save me," said Tom. to his brother Jack, who, by the kind permission of Mr. Dalyell, was with him at the time, "it will be Dr. Liston; I wish he could see me." This being communicated to Mr. Liston by Mr Francis Grant, who heard of it by accident at the cover side, he instantly, accompanied by Mr. Grant, went down to him in the country, and was in time to save his life. I must not omit stating, that this eminent surgeon charged his brother sportsman nothing for his attendance; but rather a rich anecdote accompanies his first inspection of the wounded limb, and we may imagine we see him opening his instrument case at the moment. "This is a bad business, Tom.," said he; "but *I think* I shall be able to save as much of your foot as will keep your spur on." Poor Tom. smiled, and seemed to enter into the spirit of the joke. Tom. went from Mr. Hay to Mr. Grantley Berkeley, in whose service he remained till he gave up his hounds, when he entered that of Mr. De Burgh.

The particulars of the interview with Mr. Liston I had from Jack Skinner (who was present), as he returned from his brother during my visit to Mr. Dalyell last winter; neither did he omit to mention the very great attention and care the sufferer received from Mr. De Burgh. The other brother, Harry, whips in to Lord Segrave.

John, or Jack, Skinner, as he is called in Scotland, where he has been

the greater part of his life, is an excellent man with hounds; very fond of fox-hunting; as neat and as clever a horseman as ever threw a leg over a saddle, and a faithful servant withal. Of his master, Mr. Dalyell, it is not necessary for me to say much at present, his name and character as a sportsman and a rider having been lately made known through the pages of this Magazine. Neither need I trouble myself to describe his person, which Mr. Francis Grant has given "to the life" in your number for October, 1835; but as in the character of huntsman he was then new to me, the first meet with hounds was one of considerable interest. Neither did it end with himself. The act of meeting a new field at the cover side is one of an unusually exhilirating nature; and, calling to my recollection an account of a capital run over this part of the country about six years back, as recorded in the pages of the Old Sporting Magazine, in Mr. Chalmers's day, in which Mr. Chalmers himself, the Douglases of Brickton, Captain Peter Hay of Mugdrum, Mr. Hay of Latham, Mr. Stewart of St. Fort House, and Mr. Greenhill had particularly distinguished themselves by their horsemanship, I naturally sought their acquaintance. To two of them, indeed, I was already personally known—namely to Mr. Archibald Douglas, by having met him at Melton, when he contended against Captain Ross in a steeple-chase, and to Mr. Stewart of St. Fort, whom I had met with the Fife hounds, and who had kindly mounted me this day. Indeed, Sir Ralph was at the mercy of his brother-in-law for a nag, having considered it scarcely worth while to send one of his own stud so far; and he was entitled to a mount from him in consideration of the gruelling he gave a thoroughbred one of his own, in our first and second run with the Fife. But these things go for nothing between brothers-in law whose souls are in the sport.

The first approach to a strange pack naturally calls forth a remark. That of Mr. Dalyell, at this time, is described in a few words—in the words indeed of Jack Skinner himself. "We keep no cats that don't kill mice," said he to me, as I rode around them to look them over; "our's is not a show pack; but if we can find a good fox, I think they will give a good account of him." (The strength of the kennel at this time consisted of twenty-three couples of old and ten couples of young hounds.) But alas no fox was to be found, although we drew till past three o'clock, a circumstance I much regretted. In the first place I regretted it on Mr. Dalyell's account, in the second, we were in a very pretty country for sport, the day was a favorable one, and I was on as clever a little nag as I ever mounted or saw. I call him "little" because he is near the ground and on very short legs, and therefore named *Deception;* but he is more than equal to my weight. He was then in his nineteenth year, and quite fresh on his legs and feet, which circumstance I mention for the sake of drawing the attention of sportsmen to one or two points well deserving of it, in reference to the purchase of hunters. The legs and feet of this horse appeared quite equal to a body half as big again as his own; and his fetlocks—those most essential points in a hunter—are as strong as those of an ox.

There is luckily for all mortals a balm for most wounds; and chagrined as we were at this most unexpected blank, it was not long ere it was administered to us. We recrossed the Tay; replaced ourselves in Sir Ralph's carriage; and at the end of a two hours' drive, found ourselves at Mount Melville, where the friends we had left behind us at Balcaskie were ready to receive us. Of our morning's diversion we of course "sung small;" but although we could not find a fox in the numerous good covers we had drawn, we found in the dining-room and drawing-

room of this elegant mansion, all that human nature could, short of presumption, demand.

The next day (Dec. 16th,) met the Fife hounds at Kingsmuir, being again mounted by Captain Peter Hay of Mugdrum, upon St. Edmund, and not Duncan, as miscalled in my last. We found at Bonerbo, and again at Redwells, and killed after a hunting run of an hour in which Walker displayed much science, and could have again killed his fox sooner than he did, had he had recourse to mobbing. "Leave 'em alone," holloaed he to a person who would have had recourse to it; "let 'em have their fun out."

December 18.—The Fife again at Kemback. I was again capitally mounted this day by the Earl of Rothes, who kindly invited me to his house on my return to Mount Melville, of which I this day took my leave; but I am sorry to say an evil genius pursued us. We drew the finest gorse cover in the hunt—indeed I know none finer anywhere—called Bishop's gorse, so called from the fact of Archbishop Sharpe, the last but two, I believe, of Scotch Bishops, having been murdered on the ground on which the cover now stands, the very spot being marked with a stone; but we drew it blank. Something was said of a litter accidentally killed by putting a grate at the mouth of a drain, it not being known that it was used by a fox at all. There must indeed have been some cause for our disappointment, and for the sake of fox-hunting I hope that is the real one.

But as I have already said, this was an unlucky day, for there was a breast high scent, and still no good could be done, from a series of untoward events. Twice the hounds slipped away out of a large woodland

at an awful pace, and each fox headed back into foiled ground—no one getting well away with them but Walker and Mr. Earle, who had three falls in less than three miles. But he cares little for falls, and will be with them, if possible. Bad however as the hunting of this day was, it had some redeeming qualities as the greater number of those devoted to fox-hunting have. We were not without our sport. "GONE AWAY!" holloas one sportsman. "YONDER THEY GO!" exclaims another. "True enough," said I, on seeing two horsemen a long way forward, going the very ultra pace, and along side a large woodland cover. "How I envy those two fellows," said I to myself; as I clapped spurs to my lord's clever little nag; "they are riding parallel with the pack, who are 'a physicking on him,' as the old Shropshire farmer told Sir Bellingham Graham, in the cover!" But lo and behold—who should these, by me so much envied, mortals be, but Mr. Whyte Melville's son, an Eton schoolboy, whose horse was running away with him, pursued *as Johnny Gilpin was by the post boy, by a gentleman* who *thought* the boy was riding after hounds, which it appeared had gone exactly in a contrary direction!! It is by such doings as this—riding forward to points without knowing why—that so many foxes are headed in woodland countries, and much sport spoiled.

Then again, at Bishop's gorse, something occurred to amuse me. I saw "old James"—as Lord Rothes's groom is called, and an excellent one he is, for I knew him well in Warwickshire—riding a clipped horse of his master's, through gorse higher than his belly, and expressing surprise that he did not at all relish it, and at his jumping every now and then to avoid it. "What's come to you this morning? you old fool," said he; "you don't seem to like it." "I should think not, James," was my remark, being close to him at the time; "neither would *you* like to

walk through such thick whins as these." "*And without your breeches too, James,*" added Captain Balfour of the Guards, (who made one of our party at Mount Melville) in allusion to the horse being clipped. "Thank ye," said I, "for the climax; I shall book it." I may also here remark, that this was only the fourth horse I saw in Scotland that had been clipped, and in the large stud of Mr. Ralph Lambton, whom I visited on my return homewards, I could not find one.

My hack being at Cupar, I made the best of my way thither after this bad day's hunting was over, and got to Dundee to my dinner, sleeping there that night, to be ready for Mr. Dalyell's hounds on the morrow. But here I was once more foiled. He had kindly offered to mount me, and had one of his own horses at the place of meeting for me, but the frost was so severe in the neighbourhood of Dundee, that after sliding upon ice for two miles on my hack, I returned to whence I set out, supposing it to be impossible to hunt even at any time of the day. About ten o'clock, however, Mr. Stewart of St. Fort, made his appearance, and we agreed we would make the attempt, as it was probable Mr. Dalyell would draw some covers near the sea (near Arbroath), which he did, and we were lucky to arrive at one of them just as he had found his fox. But our luck was of short duration. Five couples of hounds had slipped away with the scent, and got three fields a-head of the body, and although Mr. Stewart and myself, who met them, had it in our power to stop them, still the mischief was done. The ground was stained and the scent bad, and had not old Racer most *scientifically* marked him into a whin cover, for which his master cheered him, we should have seen no more of our fox. But here our evil genius pursued us. He was handsomely refound; twice attempted to break cover; but having been twice headed back by the second whipper-in, he fell a prey to the

pack. This was death to the hopes of all the field, for the day was far spent, and it was freezing very hard; but although no one was left with the hounds but myself and Major Wemyss (not "the Captain"), who was going to Mr. Dalyell's house, nothing would satisfy the master of the pack short of finding another fox. "We will draw the school-master's cover," said he to me; "it is just in our road, and the best cover in the country." I begged him not to do so, for the fallows were as hard as flint, and it was nearly three o'clock. Add to this, I was on one of King's rips, that I had ridden from Dundee in the morning, for the boy who brought a horse of Mr. Dalyell's to cover for me, had despaired of my appearance, and taken him home. I found, however I might as well have addressed myself to the winds; the hounds were thrown into the cover; a fine fox crossed the road almost under my horse's head, and, *after twenty-one minutes with such a scent as is very seldom witnessed*, he was run into in a drain, and killed! My horse having fallen twice before he had gone a mile, I pulled up short, and saw nothing of the burst; but Mr. Dalyell, who was with them all the way, assured me he had scarcely ever witnessed such a scent; a fact worth noticing, as it was freezing most INTENSELY at the time.

On my arrival at Burnside, I was kindly welcomed by Mrs. Dalyell, whose acquaintance I was delighted to make, not only as the sister of Sir Ralph Anstruther, but also from having been told that she was as fond of fox-hunting as her husband is, and one of the best and boldest horsewomen in Scotland. Now as there is nothing like producing proof, and making matters clear as we proceed, I will at once substantiate what I have asserted as to the enthusiasm of the husband, and the fine horse-manship of the wife. "You have a good *garden* here, no doubt," said

I one day at dinner at Burnside, to the former, when discussing the merits of some very fine sea-kale. "*I believe there is*," was the reply; "but to tell you the truth, I have never been in it. *It is too far from the kennel.*" Mark, reader, this "too far" is somewhere about one hundred yards! But neither Millwood nor Margery, Racer nor Roundelay, Gilder nor Gadfly, were to be seen there, and anything appertaining to the cabbage genus would have proved a poor substitute for them. The accomplishments of the lady,—"a second Minerva in her studies, another Diana in the field"—are told in a few words. During a visit I paid to this sporting couple last winter, at their new residence in Hertfordshire, I found she had so distinguished herself in a run, *which very few saw the end of*, that the fame of her horse reached the ears of the present Duke of Beaufort; and his Grace having ascertained his price, sent a servant with a cheque for 250 gs. for him on the day previously to my arrival. He is called Tom Thumb; is upwards of sixteen hands high; goes in a plain snaffle bridle, and as light in hand as a pony. I rode him twice during my visit to Scotland, and therefore can vouch for what I have said.

By the bye, I must add one word more to the credit of this lady as a horsewoman; but if I were to relate all her feats, and the number of miles she has ridden to and from hounds, and with hounds, in one day, I should require second wind. Mr. Dalyell told me that towards the end of the capital run I have alluded to, when (as the Duke of Orleans said to me) "the field had become select," he rode over a style at which the ground at the rising side was very rotten and bad. On looking back to see how his lady managed it, he saw Tom Thumb—who slipped, for timber-jumping is not his forte—on his head on the landing side, having

broken every bar. And where was his lady? à la Snob in the mud? Not a bit of it; she was in her saddle, and rose, à la Musters, with her horse.

Burnside is a convenient house for a sportsman, sufficiently large for a family of moderate pretensions, and pleasantly situated three miles from Forfar, a good market town. It was the residence of Lord Kintore when he hunted the country, and no doubt has been the arena of many a jovial night. My first evening under its roof could not fail to be a pleasant one, for, independently of my host and hostess, a more amusing companion than Major Wemyss is very rarely met with. His good nature is proverbial; there is no subject on which he cannot, at all events on which he will not, discourse; he has been every where and seen every thing; and all who have seen him have seen a devilish good looking Scotchman, a fit mate for the finest young woman in the land. Moreover he is very fond of hunting, and is a coachman certainly of the first class; and as Ascanius in the field was Cupid in disguise, how is it that no female captive, no Venus venatrix, has as yet fallen into the toils of this venator Apollo?

The late Lord Forester used to say, that the best music to his ears in the month of December, was the clatter of pattens in the streets of Melton about ten o'clock at night, as he was then sure of a hunting day on the morrow. The morrow of this day told a different tale; there was every appearance of a shut-up for some time to come; and as I was, by invitation, engaged to spend my Christmas at Keith-hall, the seat of the Earl of Kintore, and as all brother-huntsmen have a carte-blanche there, Mr. Dalyell agreed to accompany me to Aberdeen, on our road thither. I will give a short account of our start.

It is possible that some of my readers may not have heard or read of the renowned Defiance coach from Edinburgh to Aberdeen — the Wonder* of Scotland—which rightly indeed may it be called. Any person, however, who may chance to be at Edinburgh, and to step into the coach office of the Waterloo hotel, will see announced, amongst many others, though this stands first on the list,—"The Defiance Coach to Aberdeen, matchless for speed and safety, at half past five o'clock every lawful morning." And "matchless" no doubt it has been in this part of the world; for despite of a wide ferry to cross, unloading one coach and loading another, breakfast and lunch on the road, it has been remarkable for keeping its *time*, both in winter and summer, with unusual punctuality at all periods of its ground; which time is only twelve hours and thirty-five minutes, which will be found to be within a minute fraction of the rate of ten miles an hour, taking the ferry and stoppages out of it!! And to whom has Scotland been indebted for this "wonderful coach," which has been on this road upwards of seven years, having started July 1st, 1829? Why, to that wonderful man, Captain Barclay of Ury, "the man vot walked a thousand miles in a thousand hours," and who continues to walk more miles every day than any postman in the country. But to be serious. This coach reflects great credit on the Captain and all others concerned in it; and I am sorry to hear that the cheap conveyance by steam, coastwise, is likely seriously to injure it. Hitherto—the fares having been good, namely 2l. 10s. inside, and 1l. 6s. out—it has paid pretty well, averaging 5l. per double mile, which is as much as could be expected from *the pace*, which requires a horse to a mile, and the Defiance had something over that number when I was in the country it travels through. So com-

* The Shrewsbury and London Wonder Coach is considered the best in England for that length of ground; and was so called, because it was the first that was attempted to be worked over such a distance—152 miles *in one day*.

plete, however, are its arrangements; so respectable and civil are the servants employed upon it; so well does it keep its time—in addition to the honour of very often being driven by the Captain himself—that the first people in the country are, or were, found in and about it, including even the late Duke of Gordon himself, who would frequently be seen in it on his road south, although some of his own carriages might have been on the road on the same day. Having myself had a carte blanche from the Captain and his partner to travel by it, and to drive it, whenever I liked, scot free (servants of course excepted), I was indebted to them for many a pleasant drive; and there being so many interesting anecdotes relating to it, which I think will amuse my readers, coaching ones in particular, I shall, in all probability, resume my notice of it at a future day.

To enable me, however, to make my first start by it, I must name the coachmen on this out-and-out drag, leaving the notice of the guards—out-and-outers also in their line—to another time. George Murray and James Lambert drive over the lower ground, from Edinburgh to Perth; and Arthur Farquhar and David Roup, a thundering stout Highlander, over the upper, from Perth to Aberdeen; consequently each coachman drives about half the ground, and has one coach a-day.

On Saturday, the 20th of December, then, Mr. Dalyell accompanied me to Forfar in his phaeton, to meet this renowned drag; and the box and a front seat on the roof were secured for us. The flash coachman, I was told, was Arthur; but this was the Highlander's day up, which I was glad of, having never seen a Highlander at this work. Now what were my expectations? Why, I will candidly declare them. I expected to see a devilish stout, raw-boned chap, with a hand as big as two

hands, safe of course, or he would not be where I should find him, but pulling at his horses ready to pull their heads off, with legs and arms all at work at once. Moreover, I had been a little prejudiced against this Highlander, by hearing him put in contrast with Arthur, and the preference given generally to Arthur on the balance. Guess my surprise then, when, before I had seen him at work ten minutes, I pronounced him a first-rate workman; and barring his incomprehensible lingo—the real native Doric—fit to drive the Wonder out of London any day, if Mr. Wood* would give him leave. His seat on his box is perfect; his reins well laid over his fingers, and as firm as if they were stitched there; his hands as quiet as if he were asleep, the right hand never stirring at all till it was wanted, when it was used as it should be; and taken altogether, there was a combination of strength with ease and smoothness, about his performance, that pleased me as much as it surprised me. "Well done, Captain," said I to myself, "what must your flash man be over this ground, if David Roup the Highlander can do the trick like this."

David of course had the office given him, and before the quarter of an hour was up, he stuck his whip into the pipe of his box, and turning towards me, said—"Ye'll tak 'um noo, sir; ye'll find 'um nane of the warse." No sooner were the reins in my hand than David was behind me on the roof, and Mr. Dalyell beside me on the bench. "We gang awa' (away) over this ground," was all he said to me till we came to the change, when he cautioned me against a shy leader, and once told me I was losing time; but he made us laugh when we got to the Captain's horses, a few stages further. "David," said I, "why don't you put a check rein on that off leader? he makes my arm ache infernally." "And mine, too," replied David; "but the Captain woona hae nae

* Mr. Wood—an out-and-outer in his line—drives the Wonder out of London.

cheek rein; the Captain swears he na pulls ataal." "Very likely," resumed I; "but all arms are not so strong as the Captain's." We took up a link or two in his curb chain, however, and my arm found the benefit of it.

Precisely at the appointed time we were landed at M'Cray's hotel in Aberdeen, where a room and dinner were prepared for us by order of Lord Kintore; and it was our intention, next morning, to have proceeded to Keith-hall after breakfast. Being, however, aware that his lordship's hounds were then in his Turriff country, and having heard some of Lord Forester's music in the streets—indeed we had observed symptoms of a change of weather, in the shot thrown up from the wheels over the two last stages—it became doubtful whether we should proceed to Keith-hall at all at this time, and whether Mr. Dalyell would not return home to hunt his own hounds on the Monday. But where was David Roup? We had desired him to come to us at the hotel to receive the usual fee, yet we saw nothing of him that night. But more of this anon.

Early the next morning (Sunday) a servant from Keith-hall appeared with a letter, altering, as we suspected, our course, and directing us to be at Gash on the Monday, ready to take the field on the Tuesday; also informing us that we should have an excellent dinner and good company that day at the Provost Blakie's in Aberdeen, who is his lordship's Delphic oracle on all professional matters. As far as myself was concerned this prophecy was fulfilled, but Mr. Dalyell returned to his "darlings." The cheer was good, the host a man after my own heart, barring his knowing nothing of fox-hounds; and the "company"—consisting of Lord Marcus Hill, Mr. Ferguson, M.P. for Banff, and

Major Johnson of the gallant 42nd regiment, then quartered in the town—of the right sort, and particularly so as the first-named two, just arrived from London, were fresh from the focus of news.

But what is this "more anon" of David Roup? Why, finding that —in respect for Nimrod, I presume—he did not intend to "kick" his two passengers from Forfar, we sent for him to our hotel, for that purpose, the next morning, and the answer returned was—"he would wait upon us after kirk;" for, as we all know, there is no coachman in Scotland at work on the sabbath, those on mails excepted.

At the hour appointed David arrived; and, after the usual salutation, the following parley ensued:—

Nimrod.—"Well, David, we thought you were lost; but we are not going to 'tip you the double*.' You have been to church, I find; I hope you have heard a good sermon."

David.—"Wall—'twas na much of that, sir."

Nimrod.—"Na much of that! then did not the parson please you to-day, David?"

David.—"Wall—he was na much to my mind to-day."

Nimrod.—"What was the fault of his sermon?"

* "Tipping the double," is a slang phrase on the road for a passenger slipping away from a coach without paying the coachman.

David.—"Wall—he wilded about the Bible a long time, but he didna seem to come to na point at all at the last."

Mr. Dalyell.—"Yes, yes, David; I know what you mean; the parson was not true to the line to-day—rather given to skirt."

Nimrod.—"Well, David, give my best compliments to the Captain, and tell him I shall give him a call soon."

David.—"*Gee him a caal!*—that will nae do for *him;* ye maen bede (bide) a nete wi' him."

Nimrod.—"No fear on that score, David; the Captain and I have been acquainted more than thirty years—ever since he first hunted in Oxfordshire."

Amusing as these comments of David's are, they would be much more so if I could give them in the dialect in which he made them. I was also much struck with the personal appearance of this good servant—so different to that of the previous day, when dressed for a coach box in a hard frost in December. He wore a full suit of black of the very best texture; and so cleanly and decent *did* he look, that until he threw his tongue, he might very well have passed for a parson himself. But who can afford to sport good broad cloth if David Roup cannot? He is a single man; and I was given to understand, on good authority, worth 2000l. in houses and cash, to say nothing of the long and short pocket on the Defiance coach, no trifle in the year we may be certain; for, as Jack Peer used to say of the passengers by the Southampton Telegraph in its best days, those of the Defiance generally wear good collars to their coats.

I was much pleased with the town of Aberdeen, the principal street of which (Union-street), at least a mile long, is by far the finest I ever saw in a town of this description; and the lively and cleanly appearance of the granite with which the houses are built, adds much to the beauty of it. The Provost was kind enough to show me the Court-house, which, together with the Reading and Banquet-rooms, are quite superb of their kind.

I remember hearing an anecdote, some years back, in reference to this town, which has long been a nursery of science. The first man who possessed a barometer in Great Britain—and, for aught I know, he may have been the inventor of it—was one David Gregory, of Aberdeen, born in 1661. Being able, by the means of this instrument, to foretell, to a certain extent, the future state of the weather, he was believed to have held intercourse with beings of another world*! I of course looked into the College, in which the students wear red gowns (but not red coats), as I conclude they did in the days of Burnet and Arbuthnot, who finished their education within its walls; and also when Dr. Johnson found a constellation of talent in its chairs, which did honour to Scotland, as well as great service to mankind.

At a comfortable hour of the morning of the 22nd, I found myself on the box of—not the Earl of Fife's coach—but of the Earl of Fife Banff drag, the driver of which had received the office from Mr. M'Cray that I was to drive his horses if I liked; and surely no man had a greater right to give such an order, the said horses being his own. This coach was to convey me to a certain point of the great North road—about twenty-five miles from Aberdeen—which Lord Kintore would cross that

* This, perhaps, was only an idle tale to amuse those who knew no better. Dr. Gregory, of Aberdeen, was the inventor of the reflecting telescope.

day on his road from Keith-hall to his hunting-seat at Gask, and where he had engaged to meet me himself, with a horse for me to ride, and likewise what he calls his "luggage cart," for the purpose of conveying my traps—said luggage cart being also crossing the country as usual, on that day, from one kennel to the other, in the hunting season.

According with my general custom—rendered still more essential from the fact of this Magazine now traversing the remotest parts of the civilized world—I give a short introduction of each master of fox-hounds on entering their respective countries, as well of the countries themselves. That of Forfarshire, and the hounds that I hunted within it, will be concluded after my second visit to Burnside, when I shall have had a longer experience of them.

The Earl of Kintore has been a master of fox-hounds in England and Scotland nearly twenty years—having commenced as soon as he left Oxford; and having a fine estate in the latter country, is entitled to indulge himself in this his favorite pursuit: and truly fox-hunting may be said to be his predominant passion. As a judge of hounds his name stands high in the sporting world; and as his means allow of his draughting largely, his pack has always been found to please the eye. It will be remembered that, a few years back, he purchased Mr. Nicoll's hounds for one thousand guineas, at a time when they were in very high repute, both as to their performance and their form; and of course the blood is now predominant in his kennel*. But Lord Kintore is far from being satisfied with the *look* of hounds. He is a close

* When speaking of the blood of Mr. Nicoll's kennel, we should rather call it the Beaufort blood; it being well known that Mr. Nicoll had all the late duke's drafts, old and young.

drafter in all respects, and appears to me to be a rigid observer of faults —particularly that of running somewhat wide in chase. For a quick eye to, and knowledge of, hounds at first sight, he is perhaps unequalled in the present age, being a second Cyrus in a kennel, as I have already stated on the authority of Walker and Scott*. His lordship is not fond of tall hounds; but insists upon the requisites of substance, with bone; and I consider his standard to be about that of Mr. Lambton's kennel, between which and his own there is a very strong resemblance, and that I think is saying enough. His pack is at present reduced in size to suit his countries (for he has two kennels), which only admit of three days a week, and generally require, from the nature of them, the season to be shut up early in March. Moreover, his Turriff country is particularly favorable to the working of hounds without danger of laming them, which is no small advantage.

Before I quit this part of my subject, I wish to notice a circumstance relating to Lord Kintore's hounds, as the fact in question cannot be too widely spread for the benefit of all other masters of packs. They were attacked in the middle of last season with kennel lameness, and to such an extent as to oblige their owner to give up working them; for, to use his own words, in a letter to myself, "they tailed over a country like a flock of sheep through a gap." He attributed the cause of this misfortune to an incautious use of badly harvested straw for their beds, having never before had lameness in his kennels. It gives me pleasure,

* Allusions to what I read in my youth will sometimes importune me, and I find it difficult to suppress them. It appears this peculiar talent always attracted notice. Cyrus is said to have known every soldier in his army. Themistocles is said to have been able to call every citizen of Athens by his name. On the other hand, Scaliger, in his comments on the Iliad, asks, how it happens that Priam, after so many years' siege, should yet be unacquainted with the faces of the Grecian leaders?

however, to state, that his kennel is now all right again; and that with a little assistance from others, he is about to take the field with an efficient pack.

A LIST OF THE KEITH-HALL FOX-HOUNDS.

1835.

Ages. Years.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
Eight..	Wary	Beaufort Wrangler	Beaufort Diligent
Seven .	Fallacy ..	Mr. Taylor's Freedom	Ditto's Matron
	Hymen ...	East Lothian Hector	Their Skilful
Six ...	Valiant ..	Mr. Assheton Smith's Valiant..	Ditto Patience
	Governor..	Grafton Governor.....	Beaufort Daffodil
	Welcome .	Rutland Piper	Mr. Saville's Welcome
	Dragon ..	Bred by Mr. Villebois	
	Tomboy ..	Do. Mr. Osbaldeston's Rocket. .	His Truelove
	Rakeish ..	Beaufort Rutland	Badsworth Phrenzy
Five..	Factor....	Mr. Hodgson's Ferryman.....	Out of Capable
	Bruiser ..	Beaufort Boxer	Southwold Doubtful
	Badjazett.	Fife Rockwood	Lord Cleveland's Beauty
	Woodman	From the Sussex Union Kennel	
	Alchymist	Mr. Nicoll's Abelard	Ditto's Virgin
	Harper...	Beaufort Lancaster	Mr. Hay's Heedless
	Lounger		
	Lancaster	Beaufort Lancaster	Mr. Chalmers' Buxom
	Reveller..	Mr. Foljambe's Random	Mr. Hodgson's Gertrude
	Gaiety ...	Mr. Assheton Smith's Constant	Ditto's Gaylass
Three .	Bondsman	Mr. Osbaldeston's Ferryman ..	Mr. Nicoll's Bravery
	Falstaff...	Do. Falstaff	Mr. Nicoll's Sophy
	Favourite	Ditto	Ditto
	Bounty...	Do. Boaster	Mr. Nicoll's Wary
	Nervous..	Beaufort Nimrod	Out of Rantipole
	Vaulter ..	By Mr. Warde's Valiant.....	Out of Gaudy
	Valorous..	Ditto	Ditto
	Actor	Beaufort Archer.....	Mr. Nicoll's Donative
	Dabster		
	Destitute..	Mr. Harlock's Dragon.....	Mr. Nicoll's Dauntless
	Vanguard	Beaufort Victor.....	Mr. A. Smith's Blemish
	Rochester	Beaufort Rutland	Out of Whimsey

Ages. Years.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
Three.	Ruby	Ditto	Ditto
	Guzman..	Beaufort Workman	Mr. Nicholl's Goody
	Gamesome	Ditto	Ditto
Two..	Damper ..	Rubicon	Out of Dorcas
	Druid....	Ditto	Ditto
	Dairymaid	Ditto	Ditto
	Destiny ..	Ditto	Ditto
	Guilder ..	By Lord Harewood's Guilder..	Mr. Nicholl's Goneril
	Grasper ..	Ditto	Ditto
	Guardsman	Ditto.....	Ditto
	Barrister.	By Fife Badjazett.....	Mr. Nicholl's Wary
	Brutus. ..	By Fife Badjazett	Mr. Nicoll's Wary
	Legacy ..	Lord Yarborough's Darter	Fife Loyalty
	Cottager..	Sir R. Sutton's Contract	Mr. Nicholl's Jargon
One ..	Pontiff. ..	By Lord Yarborough's Pontiff.	Out of Chauntress
	Paragon..	Ditto	Ditto
	Prettylass.	Ditto	Ditto
	Friestess. .	Ditto	Ditto
	Bender....	By Bruiser.....	Out of Welcome
	Bangalore.	Ditto	Ditto
	Rioter....	By Lord Yarborough's Pontiff.	Out of Rosemary
	Ranter....	Ditto	Ditto
	Curious ..	Ditto	Out of Captious
	Hannibal..	By the Lothian Hannibal	Out of Gaylass
	Gabriel ..	By Rubicon	Out of Gaiety
	Guilty....	Ditto	Ditto
	Nicety		
	Novelty ..	By Mr. Chalmers' Old Bustler.	Out of Nervous
	Viceroy ..	By Mr. Foljambe's Viceroy ...	Out of Goneril
	Villager ..	Ditto	Ditto
	Villainy..	Ditto	Ditto
	Contract...	By Sir R. Sutton's Contract ..	Out of Willing
	Coaster ..	Ditto	Out of Ruby
	Coroner ..	Ditto	Ditto
	Crafty	Ditto	Ditto
	Drayman ..	By Mr. Villebois's Dragon	Out of Gamesome
	Dragsman.	Ditto	Ditto
	Desperate.	Ditto	Ditto
	Rattler....	By Governor	Out of Rakish
	Bellman..	By Badjazett;.....	Out of Nervous

Ages. Years.	*Names.*	*Sires.*	*Dams.*
One ..	Chaunter..	By Viceroy	Out of Cheerful
	Lavish	By Lord Lonsdale's Lashwood.	Out of Valorous
	Levity	Ditto	Ditto
	Bonny Bell	By Old Bustler.....	Out of Mr. Foljambe's Favourite
	Agile	By Alchemist	Out of Gaiety
	Actress ...	Ditto	Ditto

Old Hounds	22½ Couples.
Age One ditto	16 Ditto
Total	38½ Couples.

I must here observe that the above is beyond the average strength of Lord Kintore's kennel, by reason of the last nine couples being hounds of the year, and the draft had not been made when I left. I cannot, however, suppress my belief, that the most fastidious judge would be pleased—aye, delighted—with the appearance and performance of this young lot. The puppies came in just as I left the country, and I requested his lordship's permission to christen one of them Nimrod; and I was glad to hear he was doing well.

In looking over this list, close observers of the pedigree of fox-hounds will find much of our very best old blood—especially in Alchymist, going back to Mr. Warde's Abbot, the sire of Abelard; Lord Lonsdale's Lashwood; the Beaufort Nimrod; Lord Yarborough's Pontiff; the Beaufort Diligent—running back to Mr. Heron's (the Cheshire) old Nectar sort, the Grafton Governor, Lord Harewood's Guilder, cum multis aliis, too numerous to mention.

As a huntsman to fox-hounds I shall dismiss Lord Kintore in a few

words. He has what the Greeks called the *παν ὡρον*, the every gift for such a calling—zeal, nerve, quickness, and talent. But quick as he is, when quickness is desirable, no man hurries hounds less in their work; and when on a scent he seldom speaks to them at all. Although he is—as every sportsman must be—of Mr. Beckford's opinion, that hounds left entirely to themselves would seldom kill a fox, his system is, "Ware cast as long as you possibly can." He says himself (vide his epistle to Crane) he likes a burst of twenty minutes, but *admires* a hunting run of an hour, which I am certain he does, for these lines of his friend Nicolls are often in his mouth:—

> "Can the fox-hound ever tell,
> Unless he takes the pains to smell
> Where Reynard's gone?"

But a huntsman's science is not confined to the field, the foundation of his success is in the kennel. There Lord Kintore could scarcely have failed in one principal qualification—viz. the breeding of hounds of high form, from his known correct eye to the good points of all domestic animals, which he has shown practically to the world. From the present limited extent of his pack, much cannot be expected from it as contributing to the general diffusion of good fox-hound blood; yet from what I have seen of his proceedings, and have gathered from his discourse, I am inclined to think that if his lordship had been for the last fifteen years hunting a four or five-days-a-week country, he would have been a very considerable contributor to this most desirable end. Such I know is the opinion of Mr. Dalyell, Williamson, Old Scott, and Walker, and of many other experienced sportsmen in his part of the world, whose authority is better than my own. A sight of his small pack,

indeed, as when I last saw them, would go very far in confirmation of the opinion I have ventured to give.

There are peculiarities attending every huntsman's proceedings in and out of kennel, and Lord Kintore is not without his. In the kennel, he is a strict disciplinarian, both as regards hounds and men—the consequence of which is, no man's kennel I ever was in is so clean as his, and no old maid over her tea-table is more particular with Betty that all should be right, than he is with Joe Grant at feeding time. He feeds in lots of five, which makes it nearly an hour's work. The meat for the shy feeders is unusually thick and good, and they have every encouragement given them to fill their bellies. It is then gradually reduced in substance; and with several of the other sort, he appeared to count the mouthfuls. I must do him the justice to say, I consider him a perfect master of condition of hounds.

On going to or returning from cover, or going from cover to cover, Lord Kintore is likewise a rigid disciplinarian; more so, indeed, than, until he gave me his reason for it, appeared to me to be necessary. His hounds are kept very close to his horses' heels, and scarcely allowed what may be considered a necessary indulgence. Their making so free with the porridge pots in the cottages, however, renders this sharp discipline necessary; and Lord Kintore is the last man in the world to deprive a poor family of their dinner.

His Lordship has another peculiarity. He counts his hounds on his leaving every cover which has not held a fox; unwilling to trust to their following him away to horn. This, on unlucky days, and those short ones, is rather a consumer of time; but we may conclude that he is not

of old Scott's opinion, that "it must be a poor concern that can't afford to lose a hound or two*."

Somerville, in his poem on hunting, says—on the air depends the huntsman's hopes. Lord Kintore would add, "on the winds," for nothing seems so much to blast his hopes of a good day's sport as to hear "old Boreas," as he calls this restless deity, at his work. That great preceptor of the art of fox-hunting, Mr. Beckford, had, it seems, an equal aversion to high wind, for he tells us that, on very windy days the best place for hounds is their kennel. Like all other masters of hounds, his Lordship is a great admirer of Beckford, which is evident by the notes he has made on his book, of which, indeed, it may be said, as of the poems of Euripides, that every line contains a precept.

To sum up all—there is no conceit about Lord Kintore as a huntsman, on the contrary, he never fails to acknowledge the benefit of experience in others, and candidly professes that he lives to learn. Such is the path that leads towards perfection. His personal appearance in that character is good and appropriate. Although he has not, à la Darlington, the straight cut coat, the cap and the belt, yet his single-breasted bit of pink, the striped toilanette waistcoat, with a step collar and gilt buttons, and the double-knotted neckcloth, all look like business. The boots would do for St. James's-street; but there is something particularly "*varmint*" about the breeches,—very dark coloured corderoys,

* Ecce signum. "I've lost a young bitch by old Governor, out of Bounty, by the distemper, that I would not have taken twenty guineas for. I never shall call you the 'mighty and immortal Nimrod,' until you find out a remedy for this dreadful malady in the canine race." Extract of a letter from Lord Kintore to Nimrod, Jan. 27, 1835.

and cut off the same piece with those of his two whippers-in, of whom I shall speak hereafter.

To the English reader it may scarcely be necessary to mention, that, independently of his Scotch countries, Lord Kintore hunted, for three seasons, what is called the Vale of White Horse country, in Berkshire and Wiltshire. It is only his due to state—and surely no part of that due should be withheld from a sportsman who, like himself, brought his hounds five hundred miles to hunt it—that he gave great satisfaction to his fields in the Vale of White Horse, and his retirement was much regretted. Being, however, always anxious to produce proofs for assertions of this nature, I have one ready at hand. "Kintore," said a very old friend of mine, who resides in that country, but who never hunted a dozen times in his life, "I am sorry to hear you are about to leave us. Perhaps you do so from prudential motives, finding the expenses too great. If so, I can only say, I shall be happy to put my name down for 300l. per annum, towards inducing you to remain with us." It *was* from prudential motives that his Lordship withdrew from Berkshire; and, to use his own words, "the rack and manger work at Wadley-house was something awful," which, indeed, may be imagined from the fact of the butcher's bill alone being 90l. per month! I wish, however, I could say this was the most painful reminiscence of his Lordship's hunting the Vale of White Horse, as the butcher and his bill would be dismissed with a smile. I am sorry to add that, in one of the numerous falls he had in his determination to be "with 'em," over that strongly-fenced country, he received a wound in his side, from a post that he alighted upon, which is not healed to this day, and is the cause of occasional severe suffering; but which his Lordship, with that pluck that is peculiar to him, will not admit of stopping him in his work—jocosely

calling it only a "running thrush." Like the knight errants of old, who would not complain of their wounds, though their very bones were dropping through them, he suffers not such matters as this to keep him away from his hounds, as I can here also bring proof. During my visit to Dunse, I received a letter from him in which was the following notable passage:—"I had a bad fall on Tuesday (11th Nov.) and hurt my chest and ribs, but forty ounces of blood and a *ball* (i. e. physick) have reduced the inflammatory symptoms, and, Deo volente, I hope to be with 'em again on Monday!" This reminds me of Jack Stevens and his broken blood-vessel, when he whipped in to the Quorn; and shows how difficult it is to check the predominant passion of man.

It has been so often said, as to be generally believed, that the true characters of men may be found in their letters. All those I have seen from Lord Kintore, not only to myself but to others, exhibit—independently of general benevolence, or particular esteem—a zeal and passion for fox-hunting that I cannot think is equalled by any human being. His description of a good day's sport—(I wish I dared transcribe one, in a letter to Mr. Dalyell, whilst I was at his house, commencing with the words, "Hark, holloa," or one to myself, describing a run with a second fox, in which a lot of young hounds had been at the head)—conveys the justest idea of an overflow of soul that ever came under my observation, and assures me that the writer, in the reality of what he is describing, has himself experienced the very elixir of delight. But this is the peculiar, the distinguishing, characteristic of fox-hunting; other pastimes please, this *alone* delights—unless we include music.

But Lord Kintore inherited this passion for the chase. The late Earl, his father, was equally as zealous in the field, and had the follow-

ing compliment paid him by, I believe, one of the Duke of Cleveland's whippers-in, who had seen him oftentimes in the field, when quartered with his regiment at York. "What a nation pity it is," said he, "that that mon was born a lord; he'd have made a capital huntsman."

I must now return to the Banff coach—a sad falling off from the renowned Defiance; but, as the day was cold, and part of the ground nearly as high—at least so the driver told me—as any coach runs over in Scotland, I drove it merely to keep me warm, for such a set of cripples as were put to it, at the first change, it is long since it has fallen to my lot to manage. But I must hark back still further, and preface the meeting between my noble friend and myself, by a sort of caution, something like "*Have a care, Nimrod;* don't overrun the scent," conveyed to me in a letter I received from him a short time previously to my arrival in Scotland. It was nearly in these words. "Mind, Nimrod! neither kennel nor stable is what it was—the former only what they call in Yorkshire 'a cry o' dogs.' Of myself, also, I may say, "*non sum qualis eram*"—nor have I been myself since a rattler I got over a double post and rail-fence in the vale of Berks. I worked on two months after I got it, and did not *quite* give in until I could not stand, there being a substance inwardly and outwardly as large as your fist. I went to Brodie, who probed it, but said, "you must not let them either cut you for this, or heal it." Now, although I was enabled last year to go through the roughest day with my hounds, still the discharge has been so great lately, that I am afraid my *condition* will not be up to my work. The wound, however, suppurated three days after my last hunting-day, and since that hour, I have not had a moment's pain."

Now, I am far from being of Cicero's opinion, that, because a man

may not be what he once was (see his desponding letter to Marcus Marius, after the battle of Pharsalia), he may not be a very efficient character in the line of life he has chosen, *as he now is*, and where is the man, at the age of forty, to whom the "non sum qualis" will not very aptly apply? I am happy to say, then, that, all things considered —hard services by day and by night; namely, stout foxes in the morning, and foxes' heads in the evening—I found my noble friend, and *patron* as I may here call him, looking as fresh and as well, as I should think he himself could expect. True to his time, as he always is, he was waiting for me in the road, and our meeting was such as between brothers in soul—idolatrous worshippers of the same deity—may very easily be imagined. For, in the words of one poet—

> "There are in nature certain sympathies,
> By which congenial souls are linked together,
> Whose pow'rful influence attracts our minds,
> By some enchantment not to be explain'd."

And, in the words of another—

> "Congenial passions souls together bind,
> And every calling mingles with its kind;
> Soldier unites with soldier, swain with swain,
> The mariner with him that roves the main."

"I hope you have straps to your trousers," said his lordship, as I descended from the coach-box, "for I told you I should put you on the pig-skin as soon as you arrived. Here is a whipper-in's horse waiting for you, and, as we have an hour or two to spare, I'll show you some of my country, before you arrive at *the huntsman's stall*." He did show me some of his country, and some beautiful whin covers as well; but, as I shall describe both his countries at a future time, I shall content myself with observing, that, although I had had a good account of this, his Turriff

country, in a letter from Mr. Pryse Pryse*, who had been lately on a visit to him, it more than answered my expectation of it, for the enjoyment of hounds. His lordship also appeared pleased to show me the first "huntsman's stall" he had in this country, previously to his establishing himself at Gask, which he called the "Peat Stack;" and I verily believe—to the honour of fox-hunting be it said—no British nobleman ever dwelt in such a cheerless looking hole before. His present residence at Gask, however, which I will now endeavour to describe, is quite complete for its size, and well deserving of the very classical appellation of "the huntsman's stall."

The house is situated within three miles of the small town of Turriff, to which there is a tolerably good, though not a turnpike, road. There are about a hundred acres of land with it, which his lordship has also taken on a lease, and has laid out about 1,500l. on the stables, kennels, and a few out-of-door offices, which he has built to his own taste, and sufficiently good are they. The house remains as he found it, save a few additional comforts, such as double doors, &c., and, for the purpose now required, wants nothing but to be larger, four spare beds being all that remain for visitors. But it is not the house, homely enough, God knows, and, from its outside appearance, such as would be considered *infra. dig.* by a swell city tradesman's wife; it is the truly emblematic character—if I may use such an expression—of every thing to be seen inside of it, that alone deserves notice. In the first place, neither butler nor footman is there to be found, the house work being done by two young men, one, the son of a keeper at Keith-hall—a smart, clean-made

* Mr. Pryse Pryse, of Buscot-park, Berks, is well known in the sporting world as a master of fox-hounds in South Wales, and an owner of race horses in England. He took old Governor home with him from Lord K.'s kennel, as an agreeable companion, in a post chaise—alias, to breed from.

young fellow, neatly dressed in his own clothes; and an active young man, or rather lad, in an undress livery, but with an old head on his shoulders, and booked, I should imagine, for Keith-hall, in future. Neither is the pearled and strawberry-leafed coronet allowed to be seen here. The plate, the linen, the china, the glass, are all marked with a fox's head, encircled with a wreath, on which the words "Floreat scientia," are neatly stamped. The moment you enter the house, you will find you are in that of a sportsman, not merely by the hunting whips that hang up in the vestibule, or the celebrated print of "Lord Darlington's hounds at the feeding troughs," which instantly presents itself to your view, but in the *tout en semble* of the embellishments of every room you enter.

We will begin with that which sportsmen like best—the one in which *their* "feeding troughs" are laid. Over the fire-place, is the late Sir Tatton Sykes—a first-rate sportsman, I believe—in the act of finding his fox, and a capital picture it is. He is supposed to be roaring out to some would-be professor of his art, who is holloaing away his fox, and getting the heads of his hounds up, instead of letting them hunt him. The whipper-in, behind him, is also capital. He is in the act of taking a good fence, with his eyes turned towards the offender, as much as to say—"D—n you, I wish I dared lay into *you*, you noisy son of a ——." Underneath are the following lines, in a small frame, (in allusion to the feeding troughs at Gask) which partake of the poet's privilege in the two first lines, for as much as they want truth; for though the butler is stopped out, the cook is not, and, above all things, no lack of good wines at Gask:—

"On Irish stew if you can dine,
With humble port and sherry wine;

And for a time can ruralize,
The Turriff sport to criticize;
Discard all riding from your mind,
For here no jealous swells you'll find:
Fair science here alone has sway,
Fine horse, fine man, are thrown away.
Come, then, and see, that nose and pace,
Are the twin-sisters of the chase."

Over the side-board is a short-horned heifer, together with a new Leicester ewe, and Keith-hall in the back ground, which are all in character here, his lordship having signalized himself as a farmer, and more especially as a breeder. In other parts of the room, are the following pictures and prints:—"Lord Darlington and his Hounds." "Hounds breaking cover," by Chalon (capital.) "A Mail Coach." (It is scarcely necessary to observe, Lord Kintore is a coachman.) "The Mails leaving the London Post-office"—both good. "A Plan of a Kennel," in sections. Excellent print of a man, with a bumper in his hand, about to drink fox-hunting. "The Exeter Waggon." "Tom Oldaker on Brush." "Mr. Ralph Lambton on Undertaker." "Philip Payne* on his old Grey Horse." "Davies† on Columbine." "Mr. Parker and the Worcestershire Hounds." "Mr. Charles Newnham finding his fox." "Tom Crane, and three hounds, with these lines—

"Alas! honest Tom; he's gone to repose,
And he and the foxes no longer are foes."

"A jolly party," viz.—Farley, Matthews, and Liston; with the following under-written, in his lordship's own hand, as if he longed to have made the fourth:—

"We'll drive all care and pain away,
And pass a jovial night."

* Philip Payne, huntsman to the late Duke of Beaufort.
† Davies, at present huntsman to his Majesty.

Over the door-way are "Going out in the morning," with a fox's head, and several smaller things; and a most amusing print of a "London Cabman," of the very lowest description, under which is written "A Palpable." His fare tells him to drive him to the Old Bailey. "The Old Bailey, sir; vy I dusent know sich a place." But, aside, to himself—"Now, vat can he want at the Old Bailey!!" On the mantel piece is a silver horn, the gift of his brother huntsman, Mr. Codrington.

In the drawing-room—as in my own—shines the great John Warde. "The grand Leicestershire Steeple Chase." "Dick Knight upon Contract;" and "Going to Cover," from the New Sporting Magazine. "Two Boxers in attitude;" several eminent race horses: some good coaching pictures, amongst them the Brighton Age, with the admirable likeness of poor Stevenson. In his lordship's bed-room is the *history* of Tom Moody, with plates, and several other insignia of the ruling passion for the chase. But to such pictures as these, the sportsman needeth not the history. As Horace says, "Mutum est pictura poema."

In my last I merely landed myself at "the huntsman's stall" at Gask, where, at six o'clock, Lord Kintore and myself sat down to our dinner, there being at that time no other visiter than myself in the house. The following day being a hunting day, his lordship confined himself this evening to two or three glasses of sherry during dinner, and a glass of whiskey toddy afterwards, whilst I am ashamed to own that besides the two or three glasses of sherry, I put under my waistcoat a pint of champagne and a bottle of stout claret, the only excuse for which must be, the sort of buoyancy of soul one experiences on finding oneself under the roof of an old and kind friend, and a master of fox-hounds to boot, which goes no small way with me.

Tuesday, Dec. 23. It being dusk as well as dinner time when we approached the house on the preceding evening, it was only on the morning of this day that I saw the Gask stable-yard, which I was rather anxious to see, anticipating something good from knowing under whose direction it had been arranged. "Whence *this?*" said I to his lordship, as I cast my eyes upwards to a picture of hounds running into their fox, which was hung against the wall, over the door-porch. "Why," replied he, "I saw that picture hung out as a sign over the door of a public house in Morpeth, and I got the guard of the mail to purchase it for me." "Truly characteristic," muttered I to myself, as I walked forwards to the stables; and, really, the picture is worth the place it occupies, being a very fair representation of this exhilirating scene. But the stables—how did I find them occupied? Was the "*non sum qualis eram*" evident at first sight? Yes, for there was no Bolivar there; no Provincial; no White Stockings; but there were twelve or fourteen very serviceable hunters, the greater part of them, particularly those for his lordship's own riding, the same as had been with the hounds in Berkshire, and perhaps none the better for the many hot shirts they had had there. The stables are as good as need be; the condition of the horses was *excellent*, and this can easily be accounted for. Lord Kintore gives them every chance to be so; he summers them well, and they are in the hands of a most valuable servant, William Mollison (commonly called Willie), who has been brought up in his stables, and, from the lessons of that best of all teachers, experience, is become a perfect master of his business. Nor is this all; he has not only plenty of hands, but plenty of *strength* in his stables, for Lord Kintore adopts a plan which, though not generally adopted, it is to be wished were adopted oftener than it is, with those who can conveniently afford it. *He does not dismiss his helpers in the summer months;* by which

means, having little to do during that period, the men recover their bodily strength against the next season, and each is then nearly equal to a man and a half—for be it known, reader, that there are few more debilitating daily tasks allotted to those who must live by the sweat of their brow, than that of helper in a hunting stable!

There is one system pursued in these stables during the winter months, which is, I think, deserving of notice. William Mollison only opens those of the horses *not at work*, twice in the course of the day, and not three times, as is the usual practice. His plan is this:—Instead of the horses being exposed in their exercise to the chilling effect of the first dawn of the morning—generally the coldest period of the whole twenty-four hours—they remain in the stables till the men have had their breakfast, and are consequently not shut up till a little before mid-day. The curtains being then drawn, and all kept quiet, they have a long "shut up" as it is called—namely, six good hours, during which they not only can repose themselves undisturbed, but they return to their food with encreased appetite, by reason of their having been somewhat the longer without it. I must own that, although I never tried it, I see sound argument in favour of this stable management during the three dark and dreary months of winter, with horses that work hard, from a knowledge of the restorative powers of undisturbed rest, both with horse and man; as also of its sedative effects in allaying excitement, by whatever cause produced.

Having mentioned Bolivar, Provincial, and White Stockings, it may not be amiss to repeat, what I believe I once before stated, namely, that, with the exception of Clinker, The Clipper (by Julius Cæsar, not the

original Clipper), and Pansa*, these horses were sold, when Lord Kintore gave up his hounds, for a season, for more money than any three hunters were ever sold for, *all* being *out of the same mare*, as these were, and bred by Lord Panmure. And this reminds me of an anecdote of one of them, which I know to be true, because I had it from authority that I can rely upon. When *White Stockings* (so called from having four white legs up to his knees), was rising five years old, he was sent, with the rest of Lord Kintore's stud, to Grantham, where it was his intention to commence a sort of hunting tour. Finding upon his arrival that the Duke of Rutland's hounds were within reach on the morrow, his groom inquired which of the horse's should be sent to cover? "Send the young one," said his lordship, "I want to have a taste of him." Now it so happened, that there was a new saddle and a new bridle in the saddle room, with which Willie bedizened the young one, and which, together with his four white legs, made him so conspicuous an object that Lord Kintore absolutely felt ashamed of him, and kept in the background till the hounds found. But the case was soon reversed. His lordship went off at score with him; and such was his pace and courage, that he fairly maintained the lead in one of the fastest things of the season till very near the finish; when, from want of science, or, perhaps, being pumped out by the pace, the young one got a floorer at a rasper, and of course lost his place. But the scene ends not here. "He's down at last, thank God, whoever he may be," exclaims Goosey, the huntsman, in ignorance of whom he was addressing; and, consequently, apprehensive that Lord Kintore would press upon his hounds at the first check that occurred.

* These three horses fetched 1900 guineas; and 1200 were afterwards refused for one of them, (Clinker.)

On another occasion Lord Kintore turned schoolmaster. He was riding a four-year colt with Mr. Clarke, then landlord of Barnby-moor inn, Yorkshire, having been looking at some cattle stock in his neighbourhood, when Mr. Foljambe's hounds were seen coming towards them with their fox. "What's to be done, Clarke?" said his lordship, "Why, my lord," said Mr. Clarke, "if you will find *neck* I will find *horse;* but the colt you are on never was over a fence in his life." "Then here goes for the first time," exclaimed my lord; and getting quickly to the hounds, lived with them to the end of the run. He was at that time unknown to Mr. Foljambe; but as in such moments as these sportsmen are quickly discovered by each other, his lordship was soon followed by a note, inviting him to the house of the owner of the hounds, where he remained for another day's hunting. Of Mr. Clarke it may not be amiss to add, that he *was* one of the best innkeepers in England, and *is* a first-rate judge of stock of all descriptions.

Agreeable to my usual custom, I give a short account of what is called the Turriff country, now hunted by Lord Kintore, previously to my speaking of what I saw in it. It has been hunted altogether about fourscore years. First, by "the old Duke of Gordon" as he was wont to be called in Scotland, namely, the father to the late much-lamented duke. Then by a subscription pack, to which the famous John Craik, of whom I shall have something to say hereafter, was huntsman. Next by the late Duke of Gordon, when Marquess of Huntley, to whom Craik was likewise huntsman. Next by Captain Barclay, of Ury. Next by the late Lord Kennedy. Next by Mr. Peel, who emigrated to Swan River, and of whose speculation we have lately heard such a melancholy account. Next by Lord Kintore, before he went south; after which it was vacant for a few years. It was, however, subsequently occupied by Mr. Taylor,

of Kirkton-hill, near Lonskirk, Forfarshire, and likewise by Mr. Chalmers, of Auldbar, near Brechen, who also hunted Forfarshire. It was then taken by Lord Kintore, who has hunted it up to the present time—in all about eight seasons. Thus it appears to be one of the oldest, if not the oldest fox-hunting country in Scotland.

Previously to seeing it, as I have already said, I had some information respecting the Turriff country, in a letter I received from Mr. Pryse Pryse, a master of fox-hounds in South Wales, who had been on a visit to Gask. "You will be pleased," said he, "with his (Kintore's) country, as well as with the pack and the whole establishment, and you will be surprised to find his *Turriff country* so good." But the reader shall now have my opinion of it. The antipodes to Leicestershire, in its characteristic features, it resembles it in some things. First, the far greater part of it is old turf, though much of it is covered with ling, or short heath. Its surface is generally smooth, and undulating; and though not like the soil of Persia, covered with flowers and fragrance, the "green waving gorse" is to be seen in its highest perfection in it. Neither are there many woods of an overwhelming extent, and such as were, are now made rideable by the kind disposition of the proprietors towards the present master of the pack. I can answer for there being eight or ten good holding gorse or whin covers in it, well fenced in, amongst which are Kintore's gorse, Ardleigh-gorse, Muresk-gorse, The Den-gorse, Burnt Ha-gorse, Fortrie-gorse, and Leslie's-gorse, all not to be excelled anywhere. I was shown some woodlands at a distance, but in a fine open country capable of affording sport—particularly Forglen, Dalgaty, and Frendrit woods, and likewise the five covers of Rossie-burn, the Log-hill, Rothie's-gorse, Halton-lodge, which I saw drawn, all good meets and pretty certain finds. Nevertheless, it would be the

better for a few more judiciously placed gorse covers, as here and there they lie wide.

To sum up all—I consider the Turriff country to be one in which more enjoyment of hounds may be had than in any other that I saw in Scotland; for, from the nature of it, it holds a good scent; and, barring now and then a brook, a large fence is a *rara avis* in it. In every respect it is favourable to hounds; and were I master of a pack, I should much prefer hunting it to either the New Forest, or indeed any other part of Hampshire, or the far-famed Craven country, in Berkshire, which Mr. Warde used to say, he was "condemned to hunt, for his sins." It is however a narrow country; being bounded by hills on one side, and the Atlantic-ocean on the other; and without assistance from the Keith-hall and Buchan countries, would not stand three days a week on the average of seasons. As it is, however, Lord Kintore generally kills his twenty brace of foxes in the season, which, considering he is under the necessity of making short ones, and must frequently be interrupted by weather in that high latitude—parallel, I believe, with Petersburgh—is what I call giving a very good account of them. Be it recollected, that thirty-six brace was the average number of noses on the door, in the best of Mr. Meynell's days, in the Quorn country—viz, from the commencement of the season of 1791 to the conclusion of that of 1796.

It is hardly necessary to repeat, that Lord Kintore hunts his own hounds, assisted by two whippers-in, exclusive of the man that rides his second horse, who of course is useful to him at times. His first whip is my old acquaintance, Joe Grant, and a capital sportsman he is. He came to his lordship, with the hounds he purchased of Mr. Nicoll, by whom Joe was educated, and it may be recollected that I have already

had him in print*. As a sportsman, however, I cannot say too much of him, for he is an out-an-outer in his line, and very much improved since he has been in Scotland, which shows that he benefits by experience, which cannot be said of all men. He is not a neat horseman, but that he cannot help. Fine horsemanship is as much an endowment of nature, as Professor Wilson's brains are, and she has unkindly denied it to Joe, but he still gets well to his hounds. The second whip, at this time Jack Wilson, is a Lindow in the saddle, with one of the best bridle hands I ever saw; but as the man said of his son, whom he had apprenticed to an undertaker, "he takes no delight in his business," and he bolted at the end of the season. He was succeeded, pro tempore, by a well-known hand—a still finer horseman, a still better whipper-in, whose christian name is Philip,

> "Poor Phil. ..... no matter *who*—for when I blame,
> I pity, and must therefore sink the name,"

and this is all I shall at present say of him, except that being sorely addicted to the merry sin of drunkenness, he could never remain long in any sportsman's service, although he has been in that of some of the best of them, which in part accounts for his talent. Lord Kintore gave him every chance, but though he promised fair at first, the reality dropped short, and he was of course discharged. This man—for he is forty years of age—would be invaluable either with hounds, or as a second-horse rider, could he resist his propensity to drink, which has brought him to the very abyss of wretchedness. Feeling a respect for his accomplishments, I read him a long lecture, but doubtless I might have saved my breath.

* It may not be amiss to repeat the anecdote I am alluding to. During my last visit to Mr. Nicoll, and at the end of the last year of his keeping hounds, I said one day to Joe, that I could not think what was come to his master, for he scarcely now ever went into the kennel. Joe was silent, but on my pressing him for a reason for it, he replied with a sigh (we were with the hounds at the moment), "Well, sir; I suppose he is *a weaning himself from 'em.*"

The character of these hounds and their owner may perhaps be best ppreciated by the insertion of the following paragraph, from the Aberdeen Journal of October 2nd, 1835.

DINNER—AND PRESENTATION OF A PIECE OF PLATE TO THE EARL OF KINTORE.

"On Wednesday last, a dinner was given to the Earl of Kintore, at Cooper's Inn at Turriff, by the Proprieters of Fox Covers in that neighbourhood, and other gentlemen who are in the habit of hunting with his lordship's hounds. Amongst those present, we noticed Mr. Duff of Hatton, Mr. Leslie of Dunlugas, Mr. Forbes of Blackford, Mr. Urquhart of Craigston, Mr. Leslie of Rothie, Mr. James Ramsay, Major Dunbar of Mountcoffer, Mr Morison, younger, of Auchintoul, Mr. Nesbit, &c. Sir Michael Bruce, Mr. Grant of Tillyfour, Colonel Gordon of Park, Mr. Bisset of Lessendrum, and Mr. Buchan of Auchmacoy, were prevented by unavoidable circumstances from attending. Mr. Morison was in the Chair, and Mr. Leslie of Dunlugas, acted as Croupier. After the cloth was removed, and the health of the King, the Queen, and the other branches of the Royal Family had been drunk with all the honours, a very handsome Piece of Plate, which it had been intended to present to the Noble Earl at the conclusion of the last hunting season, but which had arrived too late, was placed on the table before the Chairman, who, in proposing the health of his lordship with all the honours, expressed the great gratification he felt in being deputed by the gentlemen of the neighbourhood in which his lordship had now hunted for several seasons, to convey to him the sense of obligation that those gentlemen entertained for the kindness and urbanity which had ever distinguished his lordship since he came amongst them; and, at the same time, to beg his lordship's acceptance of the Piece of Plate now before them, as a mark

of respect from those gentlemen, whose representative on this occasion he (the Chairman) had the honour to be. Lord Kintore returned thanks in the following terms: GENTLEMEN—I hardly know how to thank you for this totally uncalled for and most unmerited mark of your friendship towards me. If, during the dull winter months, the fox-hounds have shown you any sport, it has been owing to your own individual exertions in having preserved the foxes, in having cut rides, &c. in your covers, with, I trust and hope I may add, the good-will of the tenantry to boot, that has enabled me to promote your sport. To you both, do I return my hearty thanks. But, to you, Gentlemen here present, in particular, I cannot sufficiently express how much I appreciate this kindness, and can only now beg you to accept the humble but grateful thanks of an individual whose soul from his cradle has been rivetted in the chase, and who will ever hold fast, until the main earth receives him, this distinguished token of your good-will. Gentlemen, I have the honour to drink your good healths, sincerely wishing from my heart that unanimity, good fellowship, and fox-hunting, may long flourish in this northern, but most hospitable 'Land of Cakes.'"

Tuesday, 23rd.—Our first draw this day was a fine gorse, which we supposed we had drawn blank. On the hounds being holloaed away, however, and nearly all arrived at their huntsman's horse's heels, a field's length from the cover, rather a singular circumstance occurred. One hound, called Druid, stood by himself, with his head turned towards the cover, and his ears erect, as if listening to some sound. "What can that hound be listening to?" said Lord Kintore to me; but before I could answer the question, away he went to cry. The fact was, a couple of hounds were running hard in the wood, having found the fox after the body had left it, and we were very near being indebted to

Druid, whom we afterwards christened "the Listener," for a fine run. We went well away with our fox; but no sooner had the hounds settled to him, and were carrying a right good head, than we came to a large morass, and our huntsman ordered them to be stopped. On my mentioning this unlucky event to Williamson, he said, "I differ with his lordship on this point; I would not have stopped my hounds, and for this reason: foxes seldom run *far* on a morass; they dont like it, for they soon find hounds have an advantage over them, on that kind of ground." We found a second fox; had a very sharp quarter of an hour to ground; bolted and killed him. I rode a grey horse called Skim, out of his lordship's own stable, and ridden by him in the South—reckoned, I believe, the quickest in the whole stud, and apparently thorough-bred.

In the first of these short bursts, I rode over a kind of ground that I had never ridden over before. It was planted with fir trees, far enough apart not to interrupt speed, but abounding with large hillocks, as high as a horse's knees, which might be said to

> "Peep like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
> Half hidden, with the copse so green;"

but still of that yielding nature, from the vegetable stuff of which they were composed, and not like those in Tilton field, in Lord Lonsdale's country, which are nearly as hard as rock—that there is little danger to be apprehended from a horse striking them. At least so it appeared; for Joe Grant went at full speed through the cover, and I was bound to follow him, not knowing the extent of it. No sooner were we out of it, and well landed with the hounds, than the morass appeared in view, and "Stop 'em, Joe," was the word of command. Barring the bog, an excellent and roomy country was before us.

I must here mention another curious anecdote of a hound in this pack, which will be interesting to masters of packs. It is of a five-year, hunter, called Hymen, who not being able to run up, but a favorite, was given away to a person in Turriff, having his liberty to go where he liked. Hearing his old companions running very hard one day, near to his quarters, he contrived to nick in upon them, and was observed to get to the head. Moreover, he came home to kennel with them that evening, and, returning to regular work, was again able to run up, which I was myself a witness to. We may conclude that, to a month's rest, with unrestrained liberty of action, was this hound indebted for a renovation of his bodily powers. I have heard it stated, but my experience fails me here, that what are called trencher hounds, i. e. hounds which are never kennelled, very rarely become lame from the mere consequences of work, accidents excepted. But why should not hounds, as well as human beings, be occasionally subject to temporary bodily infirmities, which yield to a change of habits of life and diet, such as this hound was subjected to? It is my opinion that many a debilitated constitution in men might be renovated by four or five years of temperate living, early hours, and rest.

We had an addition to our dinner party this day of Colonel Gordon of Park, an intimate friend of his lordship, and I conclude the representative of a gentleman of that name and place mentioned by Dr. Johnson, as having been on a visit to the Earl of Errol, at the period of his visiting him. His name was familiar to me by having a short time previously read in the papers of an extraordinary leap taken in his grounds, by Lord Kintore's whipper-in, Jack Wilson, with the very mare that his lordship mounted me upon on my descent from the Banff coach box. But in reference to his name I have another observation to make.

He had been introduced to me as Colonel Gordon, and yet I heard my host perpetually calling him "Park." "How can this be?" said I to myself; "I must have miscomprehended my friend." I found out, however, upon inquiry, that it is usual, in Scotland, to call gentlemen by the names of their places, as well as by their proper names. A moment's consideration suggests the propriety of this distinction—as without it the Campbells and the M'Gregors would be very difficult to particularize; and if the Jones's and Williams's of Wales, as well as the Smiths of England, were thus registered amongst their acquaintance, it would save a multitude of questions. "Pray *what* Mr. Jones may you want?" said the porter of Jesus College, Oxford, to the Mr. Jones who inquired for his cousin. "Mr. *John* Jones," said the inquirer. "There are eleven Mr. *John* Jones's in college," replied the porter.

About nine o'clock it was announced to us, as we sat over our wine, that "the lamps were lighted;" and now quite a new scene presented itself. This was the sight of a pack of fox-hounds on their beds, by the reflection of patent lamps, with very bright reflectors; and I must say I never witnessed a more interesting sight of a like description than this was. The dog-hounds took but little notice of us on our entrance; most of them, indeed, appeared to regard us as intruders on their repose, and never raised their heads from the comfortable position in which they had placed them*; but, as it were to mark the characteristic difference of the sexes, the bitches, with few exceptions, leaped down from the

* It is possible some of my readers may never have seen a pack of fox-hounds in this situation—in a state of repose for the night; and I wonder it has not attracted the notice of an artist, for it would make a beautiful and interesting picture. Their bodies appear as it were dove-tailed into each other; and they seem absolutely to place themselves with a view to the comfort of their neighbours as well as to that of themselves, especially in allowing them to make pillows of their carcases for their heads.

benches to welcome us, and fondled us with all their might. I would not have missed this scene for a good deal. The love of the beautiful is an instinct implanted in us by nature, and whether in an elegant young lady, or an elegant fox-hound bitch, it will command our admiration; and as I saw Agile and Actress† leaping from their beds, with their sterns lashing their sides, I considered that I saw the essence of beauty displayed in the brute race. And indeed if beauty consists of a proportion of parts which please the eye, and a certain composition of colour and figure that cause delight in the beholder (which I belive is no false definition of it), the animals I am speaking of may certainly lay claim to it. This pleasing picture, however, was greatly heightened by the sort of ultra-cleanliness practised in this kennel, each hound being washed from head to stern after every day's hunting, which caused the variegated colours of their skins to be displayed with increased lustre, by the powerful light of the lamps.

From the kennel we proceeded to the stables, where the stud was likewise to be viewed by the aid of patent lamps. The effect of them was not lost here; they not only threw an air of cheerfulness and comfort round the stalls and beds, and set off to advantage the clean condition in which they are kept under the vigilant eye of Willie, but the bloom on the skins of the horses shone with a sort of prismatic brightness, almost beyond what the sun has the power of showing.

Wednesday, 24.—A dies non, in the hunting way. Breakfasted at ten; head queer, and copper rather hot. Walked round the farm; looked into the stalls, wherein were about a dozen black stots getting fat

† Two beautiful badger-pied bitches, sisters, by Alchymist, out of Gaiety.

upon turnips, and saw the hounds fed. Dined at Hatton-castle, a very fine place, about five miles from Gask, with the Hon. Mr. and Mrs. Duff, the former suffering from a rupture of the tendo Achilles. But my noble friend and myself were like to have been more than quits with our host, on our road to his house, in a Turriff post-chaise. It was very dark when we started, and no lamps to the "yellow." "We shall be upset," said I to Lord K., "for this fellow (the post-boy, driving from the dicky) is nearly blind I am sure."—"Never fear him," said his lordship, "he knows the road." However, after various tossings from one side of the carriage to the other, knocking our heads together like Punch and his wife, down we went into a hole, which I subsequently measured—two feet four inches deep. But, reader, mind the *sang froid* with which the fellow spoke of this trifling mistake! "Where the devil did you get to?" said I to him as I alighted from the carriage at the castle. "Wall, it was a varry *kittle* (Scottice *queer*) place," was all the reply he made; and surely Longinus himself could not have given a more concise one.

Thursday, 25.—"See what it is to have a bit of religion about one," said Jack Willan a short time back, when his cad's leg was broken by the axle-tree of his coach breaking on a *Sunday*, when Jack never "tools 'em."—See what it is *not* to be of the kirk of Scotland," say I; for Mr. Ramsay's hounds had a splendid run on this day (Christmas-day), whilst Lord Kintore's were snug in their kennel. But although we could not hunt on Christmas-day, we saw something that reminded us of hunting. We walked to "Kintore's-gorse," which is hard by, and certainly a finer was never seen, neither was a finer hunting day ever seen or felt,

(Not a murmur's on the mountain,
And the vale is mute as death ;
And the mirror of the fountain
Is unbroken by a breath,)

and the sky, as sunset approached, presented the grandest aereal landscape, if I may be allowed so to call it, that I ever remember to have witnessed, and drew forth our mutual admiration. But, as Thompson says of the flowers—

——— " Who can paint
Like nature ? Can imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation, hues like hers ?"

And who can wonder, thought I within myself, that the untutored Indian should believe he sees God in the clouds, and hears him in the wind.

We had to-day another trial of the Turriff post-boy ; but wishing to avoid another " kittle place," he was provided with lamps to lighten his darkness. " We shall eat our Christmas dinner," said Lord Kintore to me on the previous evening, " with that honest-hearted Scotch squire, whom you saw the other day day in the field—Mr. Leslie, of Dunlugas, who has a beautiful place on the banks of the Deveron river, between this and Banff;" and at six o'clock we were at our post. The " honest-hearted Scotch squire" had asked a few good fellows to meet us* ; and although the philosophers will have it there are no happy lives, they admit there are happy days, and this with us was one of them ; and *we* made the most of it. Lord Kintore gave us " The Swell Drags-man' in his best style, and topping up the evening with a good supper and a

* Among them were Mr. Morison, who has also a beautiful place called Mount Blaines, on Deveron's banks ; Mr. Abercromby Duff, Mr. Nesbitt, brother-in-law to that celebrated sportsman the Hon. Martin Hawke, &c. &c.

glass of old whiskey toddy, the best I ever tasted, we cared not a rush on our road home for all the kittle places in Scotland.

Knocked about the world as I have been, there are few nations of whom I have not seen a specimen, but never until this day did I have my legs under the same table with a Norwegian—still less with a distinguished officer of the Norwegian navy. This was Captain Leslie, of that service, related twofold to our host; first, by kindred blood, and, secondly, by having married his sister. Fortunately for me, this was one of his triennial visits to Dunlugas; and I say fortunately, because I should otherwise have missed the opportunity of seeing what I considered to be a fine specimen of any nation—a kind hearted, honest sailor, uniting the characteristic traits of his profession, with the easy deportment of the gentleman. From his intercourse with Great Britain, he is sufficiently conversant in our language, and, barring a trifling peculiarity of accent, might readily be mistaken for a native of it. But what can he say of us Britons, I marvel, when he returns to Norway, after having confessed to me, as he did confess, that he drank more wine and grog during a six months' visit to Scotland, than he drank in his own cold country in the period three years? What! why that the Scotch squires are a devilish jolly set of fellows, and his own dead slow. The captain, however, has rare stowage for a big drink, being a good specimen of his country's race, with very much of a John Bullish appearance. It will presently be seen, however, that his bodily capaciousness was put to the test.

Friday, 26.—A good hunting day. Drew two or three covers blank, and then found in a fine gorse, the hounds slipping away from the lower end of it, at the devil's own pace, giving Joe a start by himself. His

huntsman, however, was pretty soon in his place, and we had a very quick thirty-five minutes to the first check, killing him in Hatton-park. Lord Kintore rode one of his old Berkshire horses, a thorough-bred roarer, who carried him brilliantly, and I rode another, *The Professor*, a great favourite of his lordship's. The pace was a little too quick for me, the first quarter of an hour, and just as I had a chance to be with them by a turn in my favour, I got a floorer at a brook which put my chance aside. I never saw a more treacherous bit of ground than the banks of this brook. They appeared as green as a bowling-green, and smooth as a turnpike road, so that, trying to catch hounds at the moment, I went very fast at it, when The Professor found himself anything but in clover. He sank above his knees on the rising side; and as one of my stirrups was wrenched out of the bars, I conclude I must have been in trouble. Lord K.'s second horseman, however, having caught my horse, I got up with them in the park, before they had killed their fox, and had the pleasure of giving a helping hand in killing him, by having heard a hound or two turn short back, in the cover, whilst the body were at fault outside. The pace up to this check had been capital, and pug must have been turned up in view, had he kept on. The fact was, he was headed; having gone one field from the cover, facing a good country.

Saturday, 27.—No sport in the morning, but a sharp burst in the evening; in short, we *went the pace*, and did honour to the festivity of the season. Our party was the same as at Dunlugas, being disappointed of Mr. Duff's (of Hatton-park) company, who pleaded the tendo Achilles. Drinkers, they say, should have no memories—at least a Grecian proverb so says. Perhaps not, but had I been dipt in Lethe, I could not, I think, have forgotton some of the proceedings of this jovial night. For example—I could not have forgotten that besides wine at dinner, I carried to bed, and

slept comfortably upon, three bottles of stout claret, for it was "a clear stage and no favour," much less any heel taps. I could not have forgotten my having placed upon the table the picture of Farley, Matthews, and Liston, as a faithful representation of the then passing scene. But above all things, could I have left in "the beggarly, black bruck," as poor Jacky Bunce would have called the Stygian stream, all recollection of the Norwegian Captain supplicating for mercy, as "the pace was choking him? Oh no; t'were impossible to have done so; it was one of the richest scenes I had ever witnessed over any man's mahogany; and I am quite certain the proverbial good nature of this son of Neptune will forgive me the recapitulation of it. "My lord," said he, after a certain time, as the bottle approached him (*heel taps off;*) "may I be allowed a tumbler?" (Scottice, for giving a preference to whiskey toddy over wine.) "Certainly not," replied my lord. "Encore, on a like occasion."—"My lord, *may* I be allowed a tumbler?"—"Certainly not," replied my lord again. At length looking upon a bumper that stood before him, with the rose floating in the middle of it, and like Æneas, in his peril—"*duplices tendens ad sidera palmas*"—he most pathetically exclaimed, "My lord I *sooplicate* for a tumbler; I *cannot* drink any more claret." He might as well have asked for the moon; so giving up the point as a hopeless case, he set to work manfully, drinking his share to the last drop.

Sunday, 28.—The period for the hounds returning to their home kennel having arrived, Lord Kintore left Gask this morning for Keith-hall, and I betook myself to Dunlugas for the purpose of spending a couple of days with "the honest, kind-hearted Scotch squire" to whom it belongs, and with the intention of proceeding to Keith-hall on the following Tuesday, to be ready for Wednesday's hunting. To catch this hospitable gentleman by himself—that is to say, without some friends in his

house, would be a task about as difficult as to catch a weazel asleep; but we agreed upon taking a pull, and having a quiet evening—an agreeable one is a certainty at Dunlugas. On the following morning the carriage was at the door, about eleven o'clock, to take us to Duff-house, the noble seat of the Earl of Fife, who had heard of my being in the country, and had done me the honour to make kind mention of me in a letter to Lord Kintore. To say his lordship received us,—Mr. Abercromby Duff, Mr. Leslie, and Captain Leslie were of the party--with his usual highly refined politeness and address would be saying little; for, towards myself, his attentions were all but distressing. He led me through every room, showed me every picture and every statue in this magnificent mansion—no slight task I assure you, for the suites of rooms appeared to me to be interminable; and afterwards accompanied us through the grounds, showing us his various improvements. But the finest feature in these extensive grounds had been visited by us previously to our arrival at the house. This was the celebrated bridge of Alva, which crosses the river Deveron, in a beautifully wooded part of the park, and is, I believe, generally visited by the tourist. Who the architect was I was not able to be informed; but the elegant simplicity of the structure, and the fine proportions of the arch, are worthy of an Inigo Jones. But speaking of architecture, I cannot omit a notice of the front of Duff-house, which, independent of its sculptural decorations, unites the majesty of the Doric with the gracefulness of the Ionic order; and I could have almost made myself believe I was looking at the theatre of Marcellus. As for the number of pictures and portraits inside, I should think the Ποικλή of the ancient Greeks could hardly have contained more.

All who know Lord Fife, know that he is one of the best-natured

least assuming persons of his rank that perhaps the peerage can produce, at the same time that he is a most finished gentleman. In the course of our chat we talked over old times, and some that he appeared to look back upon with encreased pleasure. They were those of his sporting days, although, as his lordship said, they were but few, having only been one year at Melton. But we had each hunted with Lord Vernon, and had heard Sam Lawley's holloa, which we were not likely to forget; and we had each witnessed the splendour of Fisherwick-house*. We talked over *Thé* Levett (as Theophilus Levett was called), on Banker; Sambrook Anson, on Neptune; the Boultby's, the little lawyer, Ned Croxall, the little tanner of Nuneaton†, and others, who used to go so well to hounds in those bye-gone days. Then we had each ridden alongside Lord Forester, and all his brilliant contemporaries, many of whom with himself, are now in their graves. "But is it possible," said his lordship, "that, as I am told he is, the Tom Cholmondeley of those times, the Lord Delamere of these, is still showing them the way in Cheshire?" I assured him that I had reason to believe he was still going with the best men there, and that I hoped he would long continue to do so, as such sportsmen as his lordship is are becoming scarce. The finish to this conversation with Lord Fife was a hearty shake by the hand, and an assurance, that if I visited Scotland again it should not be his fault if we did not talk over these matters at Duff-house over a bottle of good claret.

* Then occupied by Lord Spencer Chichester.

† The name of this person was Burton; but he was equally well known in the sporting world as "The Parachute," from his always appearing with hounds in a light green coat. He rode a small bay mare that was very hard to beat; in fact she carried him quite in the first flight, in Leicestershire, in Mr. Assheton Smith's time, as he will well remember.

Tuesday, 30.—Left Dunlugas at rather an early hour in Mr. Leslie's gig; breakfasted at Gask, and proceeded to Keith-hall in another gig left there for the purpose. Found Lord Kintore on his farm, leaning over hurdles, looking at some sheep eating turnips. But I saw something I did not at all like. I saw the clouds clearing away to the westward, and the evening-star twinkling with more than usual brightness. "A stop to hunting," said I, as I approached him, and I was right; for the next morning there was ice half an inch thick.

As far as the two houses are concerned, the exchange of the "huntsman's stall" at Gask for the mansion at Keith-hall is unquestionably a move for the better, for a more comfortable and better found residence than the latter cannot be desired by man. It is situated at a mile distance from the small town of Inverary, one of Lord Kintore's boroughs, in a lawn of somewhere about a hundred acres in extent, on the bank of the river Urie, and commanding a very pleasing view of the town, with its old castle, and the picturesque vale beyond it, considered the most productive soil in this part of the country, from which circumstance it takes its name. The domain, consisting of about three hundred and fifty acres, is very highly farmed by his lordship; and it may be sufficient to add, that there is every accommodation about the place for the man of fortune, the sportsman, and the farmer—rather a happy combination I wot. The stables are very good indeed; and the kennel, though small, is particularly well situated and wholesome, as well as very commodious for the size of it. It was built by his lordship's father for his harriers; "but," said he to his son, "I will make it large enough to hold a small pack of fox-hounds, should you ever be inclined to keep them." Over the door is the following motto from Somerville,—a hint to Joe Grant and his feeder, which, I must say, is most religiously observed by each:—

" First let the kennel be the huntsman's care,
And much to health will cleanliness avail*."

I must not, however, pass over Keith-hall house with this short notice, as there are features in it, *secundum artem*, truly in character with its owner. For example—you pass not beyond the entrance-hall before you perceive one of his lordship's propensities, and this is, to the road. There is an excellent picture of George Leach, on the box of the Edinburgh mail, and as many four-horse whips, hung up in a place made for them, as would serve that celebrated coachman for the next twenty years. On the right hand is his lordship's private room, or library, in which I found excellent editions of all the ancient classics, as well as of the Belles Lettres. On the left is a room he calls the " coffee-room," in which are papers and periodicals to suit the taste of visitors. But before you enter this room you are again reminded of the road. Over the door is an excellent picture of cold meat, laid out for passengers' luncheon; and in a snug corner to the right is a real representation of the bar of a public-house, in which a drop of " something short†" is always at hand to be had, should any one feel disposed to take it; and no bad thing now and then, on a cold or wet day, in any country.

The drawing and dining rooms are handsome, large, and well-proportioned; but it is of the paintings of the latter that it concerns me to speak. At one end of it is a splendid full-length portrait of a German

* It is but just to observe, that Lord Kintore affords his servants every chance to do well. He gives Joe Grant Beckford's work, with his own comments upon certain parts of it, to read for his improvement, and " Nimrod on the Condition of Hunters," to his groom. His lordship's comments upon the latter, written some time back, I was pleased to find were prefaced by these words:—" If I had thirty hunters I' would summer them all à la Nimrod;" and his dissents are not many.

† " Drop of something short" is a flash term on the road for a glass of neat spirits, implying the want of time to mix it.

game-keeper, in the service of the late Lord Kintore, and his grey pony, with the panniers, which struck me as being the best representation of real life that I had ever before seen on canvas. It is from the pencil of a celebrated artist whose name I cannot recollect, and he had a fine subject for it in this athletic German. Over the fire-place is the meeting of Lord Kintore's fox-hounds, by Ferneley, of Melton Mowbray, a picture of great dimensions, in which the likeness of his lordship and his friends is admirably preserved throughout. Over the side-board are two pictures of equally large dimensions, representing the meetings of the Duke of Buccleuch and the Fife fox-hounds, in each of which the leading characters of the respective hunts are painted to the very life, especially Mr. Campbell, of Saddel, Sir David Baird, and Williamson, the huntsman, in the former. They are from the pencil of Mr. Francis Grant, and not merely do they reflect the highest credit upon him as an artist, but show, as indeed that of Mr. Ferneley shows, how necessary it is that a painter should be intimately acquainted with the distinguishing features of the subjects on which he exercises his art. Everything in these pictures is in proper keeping; and how could it be otherwise? Mr. Ferneley lives in the metropolis of fox-hunting, and Mr. Grant has hunted with most of the best packs in Great Britain. The picture he has lately painted for Lord Chesterfield, of the meeting of the King's stag-hounds, must be considered the *chef d'œuvre* of modern days in that line. The figures are most admirably grouped, and include about a dozen of the principal noblemen and gentlemen who attend his Majesty's hunt, with Davies, the huntsman, in the midst of them, absolutely starting from the canvass.

Knowing that Lord Brougham had been visiting at Keith-hall in the autumn, I had the curiosity to ask Lord Kintore, whether his lordship had

made any remark on either of these pictures, which could not but have attracted his notice, by reason of their vast dimensions—to say nothing of the striking likeness of his host, which must have faced him as he sat at dinner;—he told me he had *not* alluded to them in any way, which I must say, surprised me; and I was naturally led to moralize upon the fact. "Parva sunt hæc," muttered I to myself, in the words of one great man, "sed parva ista non contemnenda; majores nostri maximas has res fecerunt." But how much less than little, thought I, must such things appear in the eyes of another perhaps still greater man!

"I suppose," said an intimate friend of Lord Kintore's to me, at Edinburgh, "you are aware of the manner in which you will be received on your arrival at Keith-hall, as all brother fox-hunters are. You will be met by David at the steps, with a silver fox's head full of claret, by way of a hearty welcome." "With all my heart," I replied, "I like a hearty welcome; it makes every thing taste so sweet." "But that is not all," continued my informant; "what are the odds against your having *Timotheus* in the evening?" "Timotheus!" said I, "what can Timotheus have to do with fox-hunters, unless it be in remembrance of his musical pipe, or his poem in honour of Diana?" "You will see," resumed my monitor.

I shall now show the extent of this prophecy. On the present occasion, the fox's head on the threshold was dispensed with, but there were placed at the *bar*, two glasses of "something short,"—Marischino, I believe—in which his lordship and myself pledged to each other, with a good will; and at six o'clock, we sat down, *tête à tête*, to our dinner, —my attention being divided between the good things on my plate, and the meets of the three crack packs of Scotch hounds, on the walls.

The repast being finished—" Now, Nimrod," said my host, " will we turn round to the fire, and enjoy ourselves;" and no sooner were we seated in our new position, and the fire well stirred, than in walked David with Timotheus! Now, reader, I'll tell you in a few words what this Timotheus is, and I am quite sure you will agree with me in thinking that, powerful as may have been the prototype—he of Miletus, or even he of Bœotia, who is said to have mastered the great Alexander himself with his pipe—

> " Persians and Greeks, like turns of nature found,
> And *the world's victor* stood subdued by sound—"

neither of them would have had a chance with this modern conqueror. He appeared in the form of a thundering blue bottle, with his name imprinted on the outside, and the inside containing six bottles of claret, which were intended to find their way down our throats in the course of this evening. In the name of fox-hunting, said I to my friend, what have you got here? However, to conclude the history of Timotheus the Second, I shall only observe, that, in humble imitation of the Norwegian captain, I " supplicated for mercy," and obtained it. The bell was rung, and the ponderous blue bottle was exchanged for the more appropriate claret jug, and a moderate and rational evening's work was the result.

The real history of this bottle I am not able to give; I believe it originated in some joke between Lord Kintore and his much esteemed neighbour, Lord Panmure; but this I do know,—that I read in the Keithhall hunting-book, at the conclusion of the description of a capital run the following pithy sentence:—" William Hay (of Dunse-castle) and myself dined together in the evening, *and finished Timotheus*!" The

only comment that I have to make upon this, is, that I am quite sure Timotheus would have finished me.

My having spoken of "*David* the butler," in an establishment such as this is, calls forth a remark. Lord Kintore, in his politics is a liberal whig, and, like another Publius Valerius, pledged to the cause of the people; yet, like another Quintius Cincinnatus, he possesses the spirit of an ancient patrician, and wishes to keep things in their places. Thus, it is not at Keith-hall as at my late neighbour's in Hampshire; there are no Mr. Woods the butler; Mr. Chapman the bailiff; Mr. Gregson the huntsman; Mr. Smallbones the gardener; and *old Billy Chute the master**! In fact, there are no Misters or Mistresses in the servants' hall at Keith-hall; but it is "David" the butler; "Joe Grant" the huntsman; "Willie" the groom; "John" the gardener; and "his lordship," the master. David has grown grey in the service of his present master and his father, and is as reputable a looking servant as ever put a bottle of wine upon a table, or stood in front of a sideboard.

Wednesday, 31.—A very hard frost, and all chance of my seeing hounds in the Keith-hall country, during *this* visit, gone by. Saw the pack fed; looked over the farm buildings; inspected the stalls, cart-horses, &c. all first rate, and very much like business; walked to Joe Grant's cottage, which stands pleasantly on a bank, overlooking Keith-hall; and strolled about the domain till dusk. But the stables, were they omitted? Certainly not; nor the paddocks, in which were some

* It may be remembered, that I stated the fact of the late Mr. Chute of The Vine Hampshire, having overheard the above nomenclature given to his establishment and himself, in a discourse between a party of his labourers, which I had from his own lips.

young things, one of which is very likely to become first rate as a hunter.

"Perhaps, Nimrod," said Lord Kintore to me during our stroll, "you may be surprised at my preferring Keith-hall, as a residence, to my other place, (Inglismaldie) near Laurence-kirk, where the greater part of my property lies, and which is more in the world than this; but *I was bred here*, and that makes me partial to it." I answered him in the words of the poet—

> "Be it a weakness—it deserves some praise;
> We love the play-place of our early days."

But this passion is universal, and carried to a great extreme. There is a secret attraction, in fact, in the place where we have passed the cheerful innocence of childhood, that holds our heart to it during the remaining period of life; and it is in much wilder countries than Scotland, as well as under circumstances much less favourable, that man exhibits his fondness for his native land:—

> "Dear is that shed, to which his soul conforms,
> And dear that hill, which lifts him to the storms;
> And, as a babe, when scaring sounds molest,
> Clings close and closer to the mother's breast;
> So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
> But bind him to his native mountains more."

New year's morning!—Frost harder and harder. "Nimrod," said my host, "let us put a team to the coach, and take a drive." "I did not know you had a team at present," was my reply. "Why," resumed his lordship, "I have only two horses that *have been* in harness, but I think we could contrive to make up a team." Now, observe,

reader! these were hunters in the highest possible condition, that were to be metamorphosed into coach horses; and I had just had a specimen of *one* of them, which brought me from Gask in the dog-cart, for it was ten minutes before I could start him from the door, and then he plunged for the first half mile. "Why, my lord," said I, "with all deference to your excellent coachmanship, I think we had better not begin the new year in a way which may perhaps deprive us of the pleasure of ever seeing the end of it. A hard frost is the very worst weather in which such an experiment should be tried; and having once nearly lost my life by attempting it, I beg leave to say—'*no go*' "—and it was none.

As we had kept up the festivities of Christmas, it was not likely that those of the New Year would be omitted in the very hospitable mansion of Keith-hall. With the exception of Mr. Morison, who was prevented by indisposition, and Mr. Nesbett, who was detained at home by business, the same jovial party that had met at Dunlugas, were assembled on this occasion, with the addition of Captain Barclay of Ury, and "a jovial night" we had of it. Particulars I will not enter into; but I may be allowed to speak of myself. I drank four fox's heads of claret, in the course of the evening, besides the general allowance; supped in "The Hall of my Ancestors*," a little before midnight; topped up with a glass or two of stiff whisky toddy, and rose next morning very little the worse for it. Now, after this declaration, what must be thought of my advocating *temperance* in Fraser's Magazine? All I can say is, that it is

* A small, snug room, below stairs amongst the offices, which bears this highly aristocratic name.

to the having indulged in these jollifications but seldom, that I am able to stand the brunt of them now.

But a melancholy reflection attends the present retrospect. That most worthy person, the late Provost Blaikie of Aberdeen, was to have been with us this day; in fact, he did join us on the following; and now, poor man, he is in his grave, having been struck with instant death. He has, however, left behind him a character which his countrymen, as well as his profession, may be proud of—*that of an honest man.* Indeed he carried about him the appearance of an honest and a really good man; the "placidi reverentia vultus" struck you at first sight.

The bee that gives the honey, also gives the wound. Our party dropped off by degrees, until at length it was all dispersed, and with, to me, more than commonly unpleasant reflections attendant on similar occasions—namely, that, from the gulf which is between us, it is probable I may never meet some of them again. I remained at Keith-hall till the sixth, in the enjoyment of every thing my kind host could provide for me, hunting alone excepted; and on the seventh I arrived at Ury, the seat of my old friend, Captain Barclay, a description of which, as well as of my doings there, shall form a portion of my next contribution.

Tuesday, January 6th, left Keith-hall after an early dinner; arrived at Aberdeen at eight o'clock; and, had it not been that fate has ordered it otherwise, I should have had something to have said of the manner in which I passed the time between that hour and midnight. Suffice it to say, it was at the house of a worthy man who has since paid the debt we

must all pay. Willing to see something more of the town, as well as unwilling to rise at five, the hour of the Defiance starting, I preferred the mail at three, which would land me at Ury by dinner time, according to an arrangement with "the Captain," as the celebrated Captain Barclay is called, who was to meet me at Stonehaven to conduct me thither. My fellow passenger was the Mr. Ramsay, then residing at Aberdeen, who sold the celebrated Tilbury horse, a few years back, to Lord Rodney for the previously unheard sum of seven hundred guineas! and our guard was Fairweather, who, I was told, scarcely ever puts on a great coat, let the weather be what it may. I can only vouch for his having had none on this day, which was intensely cold, with showers of snow and sleet.

The sight of a cheerful friend, is like the sun breaking forth on a cloudy day; and the dulness of the inside of a coach, with persons whom we never saw before, and are never likely to see again, is gratefully exchanged for the welcome face of a being of the above description, whom we have known many years, and who holds a place in our esteem. My acquaintance with Captain Barclay is of more than thirty years standing, having commenced when he hunted in Oxfordshire; and the general celebrity of his character made me proud of the opportunity of renewing it. I was delighted then, when I saw him standing at the inn door to receive me, and we walked together to our dinner, at Ury, distant two miles.

The domain of Ury is by far the finest that I saw in Scotland. It consists of a thousand acres of excellent arable and old pasture land,—six hundred of the former, and four hundred of the latter—admirably laid out

for agricultural purposes; and from its being surrounded by a wild country*, and containing enclosures of from forty to eighty acres each, in a high state of cultivation, it may, with a little stretch of the imagination, be compared to Northamptonshire, in miniature, transported into Scotland. The house is very unequal to the domain. It is of that peculiarly unclassical form so frequently seen in Scotland—namely a high white building, somewhat resembling a large dove-cot; nor is there more than one good room in it. It is, however, well situated for the picturesque, a wild and rapid river running in front of it, and a fine view of the domain is commanded from most of the windows.

A well built stone wall extends round a great portion of the domain, and as the Captain adds to it every year, the great undertaking of thus enclosing the whole, will no doubt be completed through time.

The Captain is considered one of the very best farmers and breeders of cattle in Scotland, and has merited the gratitude of his countrymen for his introduction of improved stock. When I was at Ury it consisted of one thousand two hundred sheep of the pure new Leicester breed, and one hundred head of equally pure short horned (Durham) cows, heifers, and bulls, besides a quantity of native stock bought in for feeding;

* The country about Stonehaven is thus described in vol. 2 of the Picture of Scotland, p. 248: "There is not, perhaps, in all Scotland, a track more sterile, and at the same time so thickly inhabited, as that which the road passes over between Stonehaven and Aberdeen. This bleak region, celebrated by the author of Waverley under the name of Drumthwacket, presents only barren eminences, destitute even of heath, and cold swampy moorlands, which nature seems to have specially set aside for the snipe and lapwing. In proof, however, of the industry of the Scotch people, I may add the singular fact, of cottages, and small farm steadings, being thickly scattered over this, still melancholy, tract.

and he works twenty horses on his farm, having imported a capital Suffolk Punch stallion for the improvement of the breed. At the meeting of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, of the year in which I was in the country, he was awarded several premiums for superiority of stock.

The Captain is equally highly bred as are his cattle—in fact he claims ancestral relationship to epic times, being clearly descended from the noble race of Bruce, the hero of Scottish history. He is likewise lineally descended from the celebrated Robert Barclay, author of the "Apology for the Quakers,"—he, the said Apologist, was the son of David Barclay of Ury, the son of David Barclay of Mathers, the representative of an old Scots family, of Norman origin, traceable, I believe, through fifteen generations, to Theobald De Berkeley, who settled in Scotland in the beginning of the twelfth century. The "Apology," an elaborate work, I believe, written in Latin, and indicating no small portion of both talent and learning, was dated thus:—"*From Ury, the place of my pilgrimage, in my native country of Scotland, 25th of November*, 1676."

Thus I think I make it clear, that my friend the Captain is quite thoroughbred, which to a great degree accounts for the wonderful feats he has performed, certainly unequalled by any one man—in modern times at least.

As a conversationist, he exemplifies Congreve's definition of real native humour to a greater degree than almost any other person I have hitherto met with in life, and the definition of the dramatist, if my memory does not fail me, is this:—"a singular, unavoidable manner of doing or

saying anything, peculiar and natural to one man only, by which his speech and actions are distinguishable from those of other men." Now I appeal to all who know him, if such is not the Captain; and whoever has heard him as I have heard him, in a strain of colloquial pleasantry, and observed the quiet, grave, but cheerful, though guarded humour, that runs through his conversation; the brevity of some of his remarks, and the artless sincerity in which they are uttered, together with his deep and manly voice—very unlike that of Velutti—must, I think, be of a similar opinion with myself. What advantage he took of a good school education, and a Cambridge matriculation, previously to his entering the army, I am unable to say. He may, for aught I know to the contrary, be no theoretical philosopher; he may have given Homer and mathematics to to the winds, and have exchanged Herodotus the Historian for Herodicus the Gymnast; but in useful practical knowledge, I would back him against most men; and, were I in a scrape on a point of moral conduct, there is no one's opinion I would sooner be guided by than the Captain's. He is, I believe, esteemed a good sportsman; but never having seen him with his own hounds, I must speak cautiously on this head; for, when we were in the habit of meeting in the field, some thirty years ago, I fear the chief object of each was, *who could ride fastest.* I remember, however, a singular circumstance relating to those by-gone days. The Captain, in one very open season, in Oxfordshire, got eighty-four days hunting on four hunters, one of which—a fine Scotch mare, I afterwards saw in Germany, in the breeding stud of Baron Biel!

It may be supposed, that many good stories are abroad about the Captain in his own country, and at which, when alluded to in his presence, no person laughs more heartily than he himself does. The Defiance coach furnishes not a few, and amongst others the following. It is

well known that the Captain is entitled to a Scotch earldom, and had at one time serious thoughts of laying claim to it. "But," said he to his intimate friend the late Duke of Gordon, "should I, as the Earl of Monteith and Ayr, be able to drive the Defiance?" "Why," replied the duke, "there is not *much* difference between an earl and a marquis, and as the Marquis of W—— drives the Brighton Defiance, I see no reason why you may not drive the Edinburgh Defiance. At all events," continued the duke, "if you should think it *infra dig.* to be the coachman, you may undoubtedly be the guard." His neighbour and friend, Lord Panmure's answer, by letter, to the same question, was by no means amiss. It was this: "Dear Barclay,—I see no objection to your driving the Defiance when you are the Earl of Monteith and Ayr, and I will be your guard." David Roup, the coachman, and the Captain have been the occasion of some good anecdotes. On one occasion, the Captain was descending a hill with the Defiance, at the bottom of which was a toll bar, and having a stiff necked off wheel horse, that would not answer to the whip, he went much too near to the gate post to be pleasant. "*Close shaving that!*" said the Captain to David, who sat behind him on the roof. "*Close shavin'!*" exclaimed David, "and what the Deil's the use o' close shavin' when the gateway's gude twanty feet wide!"

It cannot be supposed that the Captain has been much of a gainer by the Defiance, considering the great length of ground that he horses it, and the pace it travels at; but it has afforded him much amusement, and the establishment of it was a truly patriotic act. "Does the coach pay you, Barclay?" said a friend to him one day, who sat beside him on the bench. "I believe it does, indeed," replied the Captain, slapping his hand on his thigh, "I have been to-day at the settling, and see what a heap of bank notes is in my pocket!" "Ye'll no believe him,"

whispered David in the inquirer's ear, "*its a horseboot the Captain has gotten in his pocket.*"

It is said no man can be called a coachman, unless he has once floored a coach, forasmuch as until he has done so, he knows not how to get her up again. Up to the time I left Scotland, the Captain had only floored his once, and his description of the solitary event was capital. "She fell as easy, as though she had fallen on a feather bed; and, looking out for a soft place, I alighted comfortably on my feet." Speaking seriously, however, the Captain is a safe coachman, and to prove his being of opinion that it is never too late to improve, he now and then goes to Cambridge and back with Joe Walton on the Star, for the purpose of having a lesson from that very superior artist. Lord Kintore, indeed, calls the Captain, "Joe Walton secundus!"

I should much have liked to have been on the Defiance, at the time I am now going to allude to. A snob of a passenger took it into his head to be offended at something the Captain, who was driving, did or said; and at length his ire prompted him to tell him—having mistaken him for one of the coachmen—that if he was on the ground, instead of on the box, he would give him a thump on the head; adding, most emphatically, the following bravado: "*Aye, if you were the great Captain Barclay himself!*" The Captain was silent until he alighted at the next change, when his passenger also alighted. "Now, Sir," said the Captain, "I *am* the great Captain Barclay himself, ready to receive your thump on the head." The result may be imagined—it was "*no go.*"

It cannot be a matter of surprise, that the efforts of Captain Barclay, and his coadjutor, Hugh Watson, Esq. of Keillor, in establishing a coach

to perform a distance of ground extending over one hundred and twenty-nine miles, including a ferry to be crossed, in twelve hours and thirty-five minutes, should be gratefully appreciated by his countrymen and friends, and that they should feel a desire to offer them some lasting memorial of the same. The following account, then, extracted from the Aberdeen Journal, will best show in what way this pleasing task was performed, the only alloy to which was, the absence through illness of some of the Captain's most esteemed friends:—

DINNER AT FORFAR.

On Wednesday, July 1st, 1835, a number of gentlemen connected with the counties of Forfar, Perth, Kincardine, and Aberdeen, met here to present to Captain Barclay of Ury, and Mr. Watson at Keillor, a piece of plate, as a testimonial of esteem and mark of approbation for their exertions in the establishment and continuance of the Defiance Coach, running between Edinburgh and Aberdeen, through Strathmore. The chair was taken by Lord Arbuthnot, in the absence of the Earl of Kintore, (who was prevented from attending by ill health), and his lordship discharged the duties with his usual tact and good taste. Captain Raitt of Anniston was croupier; and among the party were the Honourable Captain Arbuthnot, Major Swinburn of Marcus, Major Wemyss, Captain Cheape of Wellfield, Captain Scott, R. N., Mr. Wright of Lawton, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Nairn, Messrs. Proctor, Dalgairns, &c. Lord Panmure, a steady friend to the Coach, was prevented from attending by indisposition; and letters were received from him, and from several gentlemen in the district, highly approving of the object of the meeting, and regretting their inability to be present.

After the usual loyal toasts had been given, the Chairman gave the toast of the day; and in drinking prosperity to the coach, remarked upon the great utility of the conveyance to the district through which it passed, and

pointed out the benefit which was received from it by all classes of the community. His lordship contrasted the Defiance with the old "Fly," which took three days in going between Edinburgh and Aberdeen,—and with the more recent conveyance, the "Telegraph," between Perth and Aberdeen, through Strathmore, and the spavined cattle by which these coaches were drawn; and, after pointing out the celerity, comfort, and safety of the present conveyance, and that what formerly took three days, was now done in twelve hours, he passed a just eulogium on the Defiance—the splendour of its appointment—the civility of the servants of the establishment—and the manner in which the whole concern had been conducted, from the time of its starting, now six years ago, to the present day.

His lordship stated, that he had much pleasure in being the person through whom the testimonials on the part of the gentlemen of the district were to be presented. He noticed in appropriate terms the trouble and risk which, at the commencement of the undertaking, Mr. Barclay and Mr. Watson had necessarily encountered; and his lordship then presented to these gentlemen two handsome silver bowls, of the value of £50 each, as a mark of esteem and approbation on the part of the gentlemen of the district.

Mr. Barclay and Mr. Watson made suitable replies, stating that they had set on foot the coach more with the view of accommodation to the public than to individual profit; and that the present meeting, and the expressions of feeling which they had received from all quarters, compensated any trouble or risk they had met with at the commencement of the establishment.

The two bowls were executed in the best taste, by Messrs. Garrard, of Panton Street, London, and contained an appropriate coaching device, beautifully executed in frosted work, with an inscription from the pen of Lord Kintore. The whole gave much credit to the taste of the earl, who kindly took charge of the ordering of the plate.

On the health of Lord Kintore being drunk, the Chairman read the following letter from him, which he had that morning received :—

"Chester Hall, June 30, 1835.

"*Mr. Preses and Gentlemen*,—Having but just recovered from a severe illness, I regret exceedingly that it will not be in my power to preside, and present to Messrs. Barclay and Watson, on the 1st instant, a small token of our satisaction to those gentlemen, who at such a considerable personal risk, and in such a public spirited manner, have come forward, and have established the best coach of the day now in Scotland. Gentlemen, looking back hardly to days of 'lang syne.'—I allude to '*Ca awa Robie's*' days,—and I think I see him yet coming out of Lawrencekirk, with a 'long and short tommy,' at the rate of six miles an hour. I repeat, looking back to the days of the *Old Telegraph*, and contrasting her with the well-horsed, well appointed, London-built drag of the present day, with, though *last*, not *least*, the general deportment and demeanour of the servants appointed by those gentlemen to this coach,—I do say, that not only we, the subscribers, but that the *public in general*, are exceedingly indebted to those gentlemen for such an establishment; and I, as one individual, through you, beg to tender them my best thanks for the same, and to express my hearty wish, in the language of '*Bob Snow*,' that *until you go the 'journey long*,' you'll continue to *ride* with *The* Captain and his partner.

"I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

"Yours obediently and faithfully,

"KINTORE."

"To the Preses and Gentlemen Subscribers to the Plate."

As notwithstanding the introduction of railroads, coaching to a certain extent must still go on; and as it should always be well done when done at all, I think it worth while for the benefit of those who may try a similar experiment on other ground, to state a few of the leading features

in the working of this coach. Although Captain Barclay and Mr. Watson are the sole proprietors, and answerable for the entire ground being covered with stock, still they have the power to sub-let part of it, and it is in consequence worked by three innkeepers—one at each end, and the other at the Ferry; also by Captain Shelton of Kinross, and the three guards over the middle ground.

There had nearly been an obstacle to this coach coming on the road, in the excessive amount of tolls. For example, from Perth to Edinburgh, they are 3l. per day, and from Perth to Aberdeen only half toll is exacted—a favour granted to the proprietors. Its earnings have commonly amounted to 5l. per mile in six weeks (or thirty-six days, taking the Sundays out), which a London proprietor would call "*respectable*," but nothing more.

It won't do to be fastidious, in matters of this nature; still on that excellent principle of old Johnson, that what is worth doing at all is worth doing well, and that we should not be content with mediocrity when excellence can be attained. I have a word to say to the proprietors of this celebrated drag. It occasionally leaves Edinburgh with the last journey's dirt upon it. Now no unwashed coach should ever leave a metropolis, or indeed any other place, and for two good reasons: first, it looks *slow*, and, next, an unwashed coach is an un-overhauled coach; and although it may be said this only goes a short distance—one stage, to the ferry—nevertheless, under such circumstances, it may go this short distance without having a screw loose, for nine hundred and ninety-nine times, and drop short on the thousandth. About three sets of new harness were wanting when I was in the country, there being about that number of very antique appearance, with plated furniture, &c. That on

the Captain's ground was all right, having been ordered for him by Sir Henry Peyton; and I saw one set with Sir Henry's own crest, purchased of him by the Captain, which reminded me of old times. The build of the coaches is good. In fact, they are chiefly London built; and such as are not, are from the yard of a good builder at Perth, and after the London pattern, with patent axles, and well fitted up inside, with cushions, blinds, &c.

Wednesday, 8th. The morning of this day was passed in a way that could not fail being agreeable to one who, like myself, is partial to agricultural proceedings, in the inspection of first-rate stock. I estimated my morning's walk with the Captain at upwards of twelve miles, although we were not off the domain; on which I saw some excellent specimens of good practice, especially in deep ploughing where it was wanting, and that *sine qua non* of improvement of land, deep and effectual draining.

I have good reason to believe that, if we led more natural lives than we do, we should retain the entire exercise of our senses, as well as the free use of our limbs, to the full age of man. It is the softness and effeminacy of modern manners and habits, which deprive men of their natural defence against diseases incidental to our variable climate, and subject them to that debility and morbid sensibility of the nervous system, which lays the foundation of diseases that spoil, if they do not destroy, life. I could, however, observe, that the Captain is wide awake to all the advantages of an active rural life, so very conducive to health, not only of body but of mind, for there is nothing at Ury likely to emasculate the one or enervate the other. I do not recollect seeing even an arm chair in the house. As for those in the dining room, if the seats of them were made of heart of oak itself they could not be much harder than

they are, and the backs of them are as straight, and nearly as high, as a poplar tree. I believe there is a sofa in the drawing-room, but as for ottomans and footstools, and such like, you might as well look for an elephant at Ury, as for any such oriental-looking things. It is, however, a well furnished and very comfortable room, and, amongst other ornaments on its walls, has a full length painting of the Captain, in his hunting costume, and two of Tom Cribb—one in his clothes, and the other in attitude. "The Chicken" in attitude presides over the side-board in the dining room; and, as may be supposed, the Captain, in his thousand mile match, is not omitted in the collection.

It is almost needless to refer to the past life of a person, marked with so many instances of public action as that of Captain Barclay is. In Pierce Egan's sporting anecdotes, nineteen of his wonderful pedestrian feats are recorded; but finding no mention made of two extraordinary performances on the coach box, I here give them. The first is, his having driven the mail coach from London to Aberdeen, without any remission of his task except during the short periods allowed for the refreshment of passengers on the journey. Having a large sum depending on the event, a little relief was afforded him by a selection of light-mouthed horses; still so little exhausted was he when he arrived at Aberdeen, that he offered to back himself to drive the return mail to London in the same manner; but the late Lord Kennedy, with whom the original match was made, thought it prudent to decline his challenge. The other was in pursuance of his passion for the ring. Being quartered at Wrexham, North Wales, with the 23d Regiment, or Welch Fuzileers, he obtained leave from his commanding officer to *walk*—as he said—to Liverpool, to see his brother who was staying there, promising to be back

for the weekly returns. He did "walk," but not to Liverpool; for, stopping short at Chester, he mounted the box of the London mail, for the purpose of seeing a fight that was to take place the next day but one, somewhere in the neighbourhood of London. He saw the fight, and returning on the box of the Shrewsbury mail, and walking thence to Wrexham, appeared in the mess-room of his regiment on the fifth night. But the hardships he endured on this expedition, must prove unendurable by any other man. For example—to avoid the suspicion of his Colonel—he did not even take a great coat with him, much less had he any change of clothes; and before he reached Lichfield, those on his back were saturated with rain and sleet. He dried them *on his back* when he got to London and straightway went to the fight. On his return to the metropolis, he went into a hot bath, and having had two hours' sleep in a bed, started on the box of that night's mail for Shrewsbury. It should here be observed, that in those days the boxes of the mail were not on springs!

When speaking of the Captain, Pierce Egan thus writes—"Captain Barclay's mode of living is plain and unaffected. His table is always abundantly supplied, and he is fond of society. His hospitality is of that frank and open kind which sets every man at his ease." Nothing can be more true than this. At Ury, the good old-fashioned roast-and-boiled cookery is the order of the day; and a man may as well expect to find the cook's shoes in reality, as any of your "*quelques choses*" on his table. A pot of brown stout, or home brewed ale, is likewise an invariable accompaniment of the smoking sirloin, or leg of fine new Leicester wether.—"Weell Jock," said a neighbour to a celebrated Forfarshire yeoman, "what did ye see at the Captain's?" (He had gone to

his annual sale of stock, when of course the Captain gives *a spread.)* "Why," replied Jock, "I saw what I ne'er saw afore. *I saw twa geese on one dish!*"

The Captain, like myself, keeps early hours. With him, indeed, they are indispensable, as he makes a point to walk to Stonehaven, two miles off, every morning by seven o'clock, and the exercise of the day takes him early to his couch at night. His usual dinner-hour is three o'clock, to enable him to walk to see his coach again in the evening; but this day being, what is called, a "company day," six was the hour we dined at. Amongst the party were, the Marquess of Carmarthen—heir apparent to his grace the Duke of Leeds—who lives hard by; and Captains Musgrave, Delme, and Gage, of the 14th Light Dragoons—the two latter being on a visit to the former, who had a house in Captain Barclay's neighbourhood. And here again I made an engagement which circumstances prevented my performing. It was to accompany the Captain to Lord Carmarthen's on my second visit to Ury, for the purpose of seeing hawking, which I have never yet seen. The delay occasioned by the frost prevented it, for I did not return to Ury till the season for that sport was gone by.

Thursday, 8th.—At six o'clock in the morning, the Captain and myself were at our breakfast, and by seven we were at the village of Stonehaven, which all belongs to himself. On our road through the domain, we met so many persons, men, women and boys, proceeding towards the house, that I was induced to ask the Captain how many pair of hands he employed on the farm, when he answered me—"about four score." There is an excellent inn at Stonehaven, called the Mill Inn—so good indeed as to have induced the late Duke of Gordon often to make it his

resting place for the night; and the old miller of the village is well worthy of notice. He is of such a towering height, and so well proportioned withal, that the Captain himself absolutely looked small by his side; and although far advanced in years, he was then straight as a dart.

The miller's description to me of the Captain's father was by no means amiss. "He always wore," said he, "a red coat, white breeches with gold knee-bands, and a cocked hat; and *I assure you he commanded respect.*"

According to agreement, the Captain and myself drove the Defiance alternate stages to Edinburgh, the Captain making the start. Of the road from Aberdeen to Edinburgh there is not much to be said, and still it passes over classic ground, and some renowned for modern deeds.

We enjoyed our drive very much indeed: every thing went well, and I was pleased at the respect paid, by all descriptions of persons, to the Captain on the road. I noticed the time occupied in some of the changes. That at Cowden Beath, was done in a minute, and I should think the average did not exceed a minute and a half, which is quite quick enough to be safe. No doubt a fatal accident to one of our celebrated coaches in the south, a few months back, was the consequence of too great haste in changing horses, by which the hook of the pole chain was not properly secured in the link. I lost ten minutes over one stage—from Glenfargue to Kinross—but I can account for it. In the first place, both bearing straps of the off wheeler's pad gave way, by his dragging at his pole chain when I pulled up for a parcel; in the next, had I not eased the near leader for the two last miles, she would have cut it. It was a nice spicy team, but, as I told the owner of it, Captain Shelton, hardly weighty

enough for three miles, *up hill*, at starting, and then four miles, as we had that day, of newly stoned road, with a heavy load to boot. Of course the Captain occasionally reminded me afterwards of "losing ten minutes, with Nimrod at work." But I soon had my pull; as before the month expired, I heard of the Captain, over the same ground, entering Kinross without leaders at all, both of them having cut it in the "metal," as the newly laid stone is called in the north!

Of course I saw neither of the coachmen on the lower ground—i. e. from Perth to Edinburgh—at work this day; but being anxious to see the flash man, Arthur Farquhar, perform, he took hold of them for one stage. And now then for my opinion of him. Of his *nerve*, wherein I understand consists one of his first excellences, I had no opportunity of judging, for all went well; but I understand it is nearly *danger proof*, a great recommendation to the driver of a fast coach; and in this respect he is superior to David Roup, who is said to have a great regard for himself as well as for all his passengers. He is likewise a powerful man on his box, but he does not look the coachman by any means so much as the Highlander does. He has a very peculiar method of holding his reins—not with the left arm close to his body, as it generally is held, and gaining support therefrom; but quite away from it, and with the arm not much bent. The Highlander's seat on his box is very good indeed, as I before observed, and I have no hesitation in saying—without any disparagement of Arthur, that he is a much better coachman than he was represented to me to be, by several of those who had travelled with him. He has a very good hand on his horses, which is a most essential point in dividing the work between them, and keeping stock together.

All things considered—and allowance must be made for the great

inferiority of Scotch horse provender—the stock in the Defiance coach was quite as good as I expected to find it. The road is a safe one, though from its being weak, it is woolly, as coachmen say, in winter, and runs heavy. The hills on it are nothing—in fact, I do not remember ever dragging a wheel; but there is one practice adopted on it, whilst under repair, that is very highly reprehensible, and was the cause of the death of an excellent coachman, named Webb, on the London and Birmingham Emerald, a few months back. I allude to that of placing large stones to force carriages to one particular part or side of it. Slight wooden straddles, or horses, as they are called in the South, are the proper instruments to be used for this purpose, which make no resistance, if run against.

The mention of harness reminds me of one circumstance relating to that of the Defiance, which may not be unworthy of notice. At one of the changes—there are sixteen in all—when it was my turn to take hold of them, I observed a twitch on the ear of one leader, and upright pad-turrets, nearly half a yard high, on the other. "A bolter and a kicker," said I to myself; but dropping my hand to them, at starting, they went well away. Now I admit these high and upright turrets have not a good appearance, but they are still safer than the ring on the reins, generally used as a preventive of kicking, in the South; and safety is the first consideration where people's lives are in our keeping. Such a thing as a leader's rein running through a wheeler's throat-latch, instead of through his head turret, is, however, not to be seen with the Defiance. Whether the strap, with two buckles, is to be found in each coachman's pocket, I forgot to inquire. If not, I can only say it ought to be.

Having fetched up the ten minutes, which I mentioned having lost on

the Kinross ground, we arrived in Edinburgh at the appointed time, and took up our abode at the Waterloo-hotel, which the coach patronizes, and where the best rooms in the house are always in readiness for the Captain when he sends word by the guard, "that he shall waggon the Defiance on the morrow." Such we found to be the case; and a more comfortable house than the Waterloo no traveller need require, neither would he often find it, if he looked for it—charges also moderate.

My last paper landed me at the Waterloo-hotel, Edinburgh, with "the Captain" for my companion and guide; but inasmuch as every thing one sees in the country is not worthy a place in the eclogue, still less can an account of every thing I saw in that city, be very interesting to the public. Our first step was to a horse-dealer's, at least to a sort of Tattersall's—Lain's Repository—where horses are sold on commission; and we did not go there for nothing. Seeing a very bad race horse, called *Master Bish*, in a stall, and guessing the figure was not a high one, I ascertained the fact. "He will make you a good leader," said I to the Captain, "let us put him in the break and try him;" and in the space of one hour he was his property. I was much pleased with these premises, and with the character given me by the Captain of the proprietor of them, Mr. Lain. He did not appear too great a man for his business, or in the words of Chester Billy, "above his sityvasion," which some of his genus are; but answered every question with the greatest civility and attention. I drove this horse afterwards in the Defiance, and found him as good as he could be expected to be for the price, but it astonished me to see how he improved in his trotting after having been in the coach about a month.

"Now what *next*?" was my natural appeal to the Captain. "Oh,"

said he, "we have plenty to do, we will go and see my friend, Piper, the great coach proprietor, and all his swell drags; and when we have done with them, we shall have 'swells' of another sort to see—those walking Prince's-street, the Bond-street of this place, amongst whom no doubt you will see some of your friends. Then we must go to Blackwood's, and hear the news there, where you will be sure to find the Professor (Wilson) about an hour before his dinner, and some others of your *literary* acquaintance."

Our visit to friend Piper was most satisfactory, and in more ways than one, for, after seeing his drags, and hearing the details of his immense coaching establishment—he horses seven mails, and ten coaches —it ended in our partaking of a most excellent dinner, for which we did *not* "pay *the piper*"—in other words, he asked us to dine with him, when independently of "most excellent" fare, and a hearty welcome, we met a very agreeable party of his friends. And in defiance of the maxim of the old ones, that the table—the sacred altar of friendship and hospitality, *φιλίων θεῖον βωμὸν και ξενίων*, as Plutarch calls it—should be held sacred, and that it is a crime to dishonour it by improper behaviour when at it, or, by a too minute recapitulation of some matters relating to it when we have left it, I cannot persuade myself to forego the recital of one capital anecdote, given to us over Mr. Piper's mahogany, by Mr. Allan, brother to the very celebrated historical painter, of that name, a name which has reflected honour upon Scotland. The story was this, but it will lose more than half its richness, from the absence of the provincial dialect, as well as the full vein of humour in which it flowed from his lips, which it is not in the power of the pen to supply: one of these new-fashioned ranting preachers of the present day, with whom declamation passes for eloquence, and (too often I fear) cant for reli-

gion, was so much delighted at finding that for three successive Sundays, he had drawn tears from an old woman in his congregation, that he solicited an interview with her, when the following conversation ensued. "Pray, my good woman," said he, "tell me what part of my three last sermons went so near to your heart, as to draw forth such a plentiful flow of tears, as I was pleased to perceive you shed." Her answer was to this effect, for I despair of giving it in the original. "That having been deprived during the last three years, of the valuable services of her husband, who had died, her only means of support arose from those of a donkey, and he was now dead. That the poor animal was a great favourite of both of them, and that they never approached his stable but he manifested his affection for them by one of his loudest brays; and, finally, that the preaching of his reverence so much resembled his braying, that it went to the very core of her heart to hear him."

We have high classical authority for saying, that one good story is generally followed by another, and we had many such this night. A compliment, however, was paid to one which I told, that was never experienced by me before—in fact it elicited three rounds of applause. But the credit is not to me. It was John Warde's celebrated anecdote of the boy whom the quack doctor cured of two of the greatest infirmities of our nature—a lying tongue and a short memory—by one single pill.

Of the conversational powers of the Captain, I have already spoken in praise. He amused us greatly this evening with some of his quaint remarks, as also with several anecdotes relating to some of the noted characters in the ring, in days in which he gave it his support. Amongst others, of the celebrated Bill Gibbons. "Did you never see none of

Bill Ward's letters, sir?" said he, one day, to the Captain. On the Captain answering in the negative, Gibbons replied, "then I can only say, you would be surprised at them, for they are all grammar, *or thereabouts*." He also gave us a specimen of Gibbons's own poetical talent, in some lines on the collar of his dog, but they have escaped from my recollection, which I am sorry for, as they were very characteristic of the man, who will himself never be forgotten by those who ever beheld him.

Having occasion to leave my card with a friend in Gloucester-place, whose door was exactly opposite to that of Professor Wilson, I thought I could not do less than leave one for him, which I slipped quietly into his servant's hand, having been previously informed that all his Saturdays being devoted to his literary pursuits, he was invisible to his friends on those days. I was, however, agreeably surprised by being pursued by his footman, with a message from his master, that "he should be happy to see me, if I would walk in." I did walk in, and it is scarcely necessary to say where I found the Professor. I found him in his study, which, as far as an object devoid of life can be assimilated with a highly endowed being, was a happy illustration of the person who occupied it. Each was in the extreme of dishabille; and to bring a nearly obsolete epithet to my aid, there was only one *tidy* looking thing to be seen in it. That was the MSS. (perhaps for the forth coming Blackwood) which the Professor had that morning been composing, as was evident, from the colour of the ink, and that was without speck or blot, bearing external evidence to the capacity by which it had been produced.

It is as impossible to be long in the presence of the Professor without a smile, as it would have been to have read two pages of his *Noctes* without a laugh. And herein consists the charm of his pen. For my

own part, at least, I have avoided that sort of reading which cherishes evil passions, and all your metaphysical controversy, which ends but in disappointment and dissatisfaction. I likewise despise the dreams of our modern epicureans, who describe man as a sort of beast by nature, and only superior to other beasts by being more prone to mischief than they are; as well as your misanthropical scribblers, who represent human nature as a vile composition of selfishness, malignity, and pride. What, for example, did the satires of Swift do for society? I am unable, from my own experience, to answer that question, as I was not born when they appeared; but in my humble opinion, their tendency was to set the two sexes by the ears, if not to disunite society altogether, and to make every man discontented with, if not suspicious of, his neighbour. The writings of Professor Wilson have been of quite an opposite nature. Their tendency has been to put mankind in good conceit with themselves and with others, by amusing tales, from which instructive morals are drawn; and the resources of wit, and the taste of the scholar, are all turned to good account, when placed in array before the artless simplicity, and unsophisticated logic of the various characters he draws. They have likewise other charms in my eyes. The stimulus of immediate sympathy is present throughout all of them, which I have read, and the personal character of the man may almost be known by the perusal of his works. Then again, the Professor is a sportsman. His poem of "The Angler's Tent," confirms this fact; and the scene it presents of the happy party, assembled in it, as well as the beautiful descriptions of nature throughout the whole, exhibits in a strong light the influence of that philanthropic feeling, which I have unhesitatingly ventured to ascribe to him.

But the "*smile*"—I had nearly forgotten to mention by what that pleasing sensation was produced, during my visit to the Professor, in his

sanctum. "Many thanks for the handsome present of game you sent me from Keith-hall," said the Professor to me. "You must thank Lord Kintore," was my reply, "for to him are you indebted for it; for taking me into his game larder, previously to my departure, he told me to select what pheasants amd hares I might like to send to my friends at Edinburgh —mentioning yourself as one. But," continued I, "one of my friends to whom I sent a similar basket to your own, was very near coming short of it; for having been taken, by mistake, to a person of the same name, residing in the same street, one half of it had found its way to the spit before the error was detected." "Oh," replied the Professor, "that's an old Scotch trick. If there are two Johnny Campbells, for example, in the same street, in this town, and a basket of game should be taken to the wrong Johnny Campbell, the right Johnny Campbell would stand a poor chance of seeing a feather of it—*especially if the carriage of it were paid.*"

Even Dr. Johnson allowed hospitality to the Scotch, and surely I found enough of it, for I verily believe I might have remained there amongst my friends till this time, and all *Scot free.* Having received a sort of *carte blanche* invitation to Preston-hall, the seat of Mr. Burn Callander, I hired my landlord's gig, and drove there on Sunday, and returned to Edinburgh on the following Tuesday. I was anxious to see the inside of this fine house—I had seen the outside of it before, during my visit to Captain Keith, and I found it all that it had been represented to me to be—one of the most complete mansions in Scotland. But the gardens surpassed, in size and in forcing houses, those which I had before seen attached to the domain of a private gentleman in any country I have visited. I also witnessed something here, as well as at

Chester-hall, which it is many years since I had witnessed before, and that was, the good old fashion of family worship on the Sunday evening, at which the whole household assembled together. To say the least of it it is an interesting sight, and the example must speak loudly to all around.

On my way to Chester-hall, I called on Williamson for the purpose of seeing the Dalkeith kennel and stables, and I was nearly certain of finding both himself and his hounds at home, as it was freezing intensely hard, with a slight fall of snow. I was disappointed in both—I mean kennel and stables, after the description given to me of them,—considering them greatly inferior to those at St. Boswell's. Nevertheless, as they are healthy, and away from noise, they are equal to the purposes required of them. And here was a proof of one of the weaknesses of human nature. Because they belong to a duke I expected to see something ducal in the appearance of them, whereas, it is the *utile* only which is absolutely required in kennels and stables, and Williamson, who, no doubt, had the planning of them, is wide awake on that point. All that is wanting of the *dulce*, belongs to the besom, the mop, and the pump.

Monday presented the unpleasant sight of what children call a "white world," and on Tuesday I returned to Edinburgh. "Will you look at a chesnut horse for me, at Inglis's," said Mr. Burn Callander to me, as I left his house, "and tell me whether you think he can carry me?" The mention of this fact can only be reconciled, by its leading to a happy illustration of one of our commonest proverbs—namely, that "too many cooks spoil the broth." When I arrived at the stables I found Sir John Hope there on a similar errand, and Mr. Callander himself was expected. "Now, Mr. Inglis," said I, "shall we be able amongst us

all to make a deal between the chesnut and the grey?" (It was a negociation for an exchange for a horse of Mr. C's. not equal to his weight.) "Long odds against it, sir," replied Mr. Inglis; "I never sold half a dozen hunters in my life, when more than one *reputed* judge was called on to give an opinion of him." I do not know that I have hitherto made mention of Sir John Hope, one of the noted sportsmen of Scotland, and esteemed a superior judge of a hunter. Of this description of persons, Sir John is one of the *few* opponents of the system I have recommended for summering the hunter, still adhering to the grazing plan. I liked his stamp of horses much, they being all well bred; but as for the condition of them, it was, to my eye, about as much like what it ought to be, *and what it is at Melton Mowbray*, as chalk is like Cheshire cheese. But Sir John does not go the Melton pace, so "*n'importe*," as they say on this side of the channel. Like myself, the worthy baronet is getting slow, and from the same cause, for he's "na youth," as a farmer said of him in my hearing. I had no opportunity of seeing his stud or his seat, which is about ten miles from Edinburgh, but that was not his fault; the death of a relation prevented his doing me the honour of receiving me as his guest, during my stay in Edinburgh, as he was kind enough to assure me, in person.

I was nearly omitting a description of Williamson's crib, in the town of Dalkeith. In his sitting room, upstairs, are many interesting objects, several of which are highly complimentary to him. Of the following I made a note:—A small painting of himself and a couple of favourite hounds; a portrait of his brother, Major Williamson, of the East India Company's Service, in his regimentals; the print of Mr. Ralph Lambton on Undertaker; and a painting of the head of Darling,—I conclude a leading hound, from the couplet written beneath:—

"*Tis Darling!* have at him! we're in for a run!
For the hounds fly together, like shot from a gun!"

On his sideboard: a handsomely embossed tankard, from the members of the East Lothian Hunt, previously to the Duke of Buccleuch taking to the hounds. Another very handsome tankard, presented to him by Lord Elcho, ornamented with devices emblematical of every kind of sport, with the following couplet engraved on it,

"Then pledge me, ye heroes, whilst everything goes well,
In a full flowing bumper—the Laird of St. Boswell!"

From the gentlemen of the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire hunt, a piece of plate, "as a mark of respect for his talent as a huntsman."

Wednesday, 13th (January), the frost having disappeared, I met the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds at the kennel, when, strange to say, after trying all the surrounding covers belonging to his Grace,—those in his park, which consists of 800 Scotch acres included, and those of his neighbour, the Marquis of Lothian, to boot,—not a tongue was thrown to a fox, during the whole day's draw. I very much regretted this, as I was mounted on one of the very cleverest hunters in Scotland; a brown horse of Mr. Burn Callander's—whose name at this moment escapes me. But although I have nothing in the way of *sport* to remind me of this day, the recollection of it can never be effaced.

I had this day an opportunity, and the only one during my stay in the country, of speaking, from personal observation, of the Duke of Buccleuch, as a landlord, although I have already given my readers to understand, that those sympathies which unite landlord and tenant in a bond of reciprocal kindness and good offices, are in full force with his Grace, as indeed they are with most other noblemen and gentlemen of

large property—masters of fox-hounds especially—who spend their incomes at home, and thus add to the comforts and amusements of the people. I am not, however, alluding to the extreme neatness and conveniences of the several farm-houses or onsteads, as they are called in Scotland, which I saw on the Dalkeith estate. There appeared to have been nothing left undone to render the tenant comfortable, or to enable him to do justice to the land, which was in the highest state of cultivation, and of excellent quality in itself.

I have no chronological account of all my proceedings whilst at Edinburgh, but I occasionally came in contact with nearly all descriptions of persons,—even the "eruditi, togati homines," (men of the gown,) as will presently appear. I also had a taste of the military, in an excellent dinner and agreeable evening at the barracks with the Greys. The pleasure of it, however, was somewhat damped by the absence of that good sportsman and old acquaintance, Major Wyndham, who is married, and therefore not often to be found at the mess; but on this day a particular engagement occupied him. I met a party of my sporting friends another day at Dirminston-house, one of the seats of the Marquis of Lothian, but rented by Mr. Adam Hay, where we dined in a fine old baronial-looking hall, reminding one of olden times. I likewise dined with Mr. Earle, in Gloucester-place, where we talked over what we had seen in Fife, and drank a bumper to "Walker, and the noble science;" also with Mr. Henry Stewart, of St. Fort-house, near Dundee, where I met Col. Fotheringham, at whose house Mr. Musters was on a visit, when he viewed away the fox, whilst fishing in the Tweed, and surprised the field by his holloa.

Colonel Fotheringham mentioned a fact worth relating to persons

who breed horses, and who may perchance have one that bids fair to get the better of man. I allude to Provincial, one of the three celebrated hunters I have spoken of as bred by Lord Panmure, and ridden by Lord Kintore. He was on the point of being given up as incurable, when his groom had recourse to the following desperate expedient. He mounted him, bare-backed, in the park, armed with a heavy stick. No sooner was he seated than the horse reared and fell backwards; but assistance being at hand, he was prevented rising from the ground until he had received a severe thrashing, which cured him. I once possessed a mare, by Castrel, bred by the late Mr. Shakerley, which beat all the colt breakers in Cheshire, which I sold for 150gs. to Mr. Smythe Owen, the present master of the North Shropshire hounds. How she was conquered at last, after being turned out for two years, I never learnt, but Mr. Shakerley sold her for ten pounds, supposing her to be incurable. Captain Johnson was also of our party at Mr. Stewart's. He was a few seasons at Melton, and once hunted Mr. Ramsay's country; but I had not the pleasure of meeting him in the field.

Bidding adieu for the present to sportsmen, I must now get among the *togati*. I was introduced by Mr. Blackwood to Professor Cheape, whose name was familiar to me, by having been amongst his relations in Fife; and I had the pleasure of dining with him twice. He is a professor of Scotch law; and judging from what I saw and heard of him, I should think that, unlike those of his tribe at Philippi, he professes nothing that he does not perform. By myself, he performed a very kind action. He introduced me to Professor Napier, editor of the Edinburgh Review, whom I met at a second large dinner party at his house, and the introduction led to my writing those articles in the Encyclopædia Britannica —of which he is also editor—and for which I was handsomely remune-

rated. "And did not you attend Professor Cheape's lectures, as well as his excellent dinners?" is a question that some persons may ask. Not I, indeed. No human being, as I have read, ever loved, for its own sake, the study of Scotch law, however time may beget a fondness for it; and I remember what Hume (not Joey) said of Lord Kames's law tracts: "A man may as well think of making a fine sauce," said the historian, "by a mixture of wormwood and aloes, as an agreeable composition, by joining metaphysics and Scotch law." But the old proverb, "damnat, quod non intelligit," applies here to me.

It would be unbecoming of me, to pass over the name of Blackwood, when speaking of the hospitality of Edinburgh. The recent decease of the father of the two gentlemen who now represent him in George-street, prevented them from showing me those marks of their attention which they assured me it would otherwise have given them pleasure to have done. I have, however, one interesting fact to mention with relation to the late Mr. Blackwood. Previously to my arrival in Scotland, I received from him nearly the last letter he ever wrote, dated from a sick bed; and on my showing it to Mr. Burn Callander, he requested permission to preserve it, as a trifling memorial of a person for whom he had the highest regard.

Even with the wisest of men, nothing is beneath their notice that tends to utility; but it is natural to suppose that, attached as I am to the practice of it, there was a professor of another science in Edinburgh, whom I did not fail making the acquaintance of. This was Mr. Dick, professor of the Edinburgh Veterinary School, and one of the editors of that most useful periodical, "The Veterinarian." Although I passed through his school, I did not hear him lecture, my engagements on that day having

prevented me; but I had some very interesting conversation with him, on matters connected with his art, and he showed me a cart load of dissections, models, and so forth. He also told me what, I must say, surprised me. It was the fact of an old farrier, of the old school, being at that time one of his pupils, and in constant attendance on his lectures. This is a rare instance of ignorance and prejudice yielding to a clearer light, and also a proof that practice itself, how extensive soever it may be, cannot keep pace with knowledge. Mr. Dick had been lecturing on the viscera of a horse, which still lay on the floor of his school, and he could not have selected many better subjects, from the curious and complicated structure of the parts, the diseases to which they are subject, and the vile treatment which they formerly met with from ignorance. But the sight of those intestines, and the association of them with the old farrier, brought to my recollection that, in days still older than our own, something worse than ignorance stood in the way of knowledge of the medical and veterinary art; the dissection of a beast was once considered an act of contempt of the works of God! Democritus, I believe, was the man who prevailed over this very absurd superstition of his countrymen, and his answer to Hippocrates, by whom he was found in the act of dissecting a dead carcase, is thus recorded to his honour: "Hæc animalia quæ vides propterea seco, non Dei opera perosus, sed fellis bilisque naturam requirans."

I also had half an hour's conversation with Mr. Gray, an eminent veterinary surgeon in Edinburgh, whose judgment, as well as that of Mr. Dick, is highly looked up to by sportsmen. I am happy to have it in my power to state, that both those gentlemen are strong opponents of the old system of summering hunters abroad; and Mr. Gray assured me, that not only cases of roaring and broken wind, but confirmed navicular dis-

ease, was the common result of a summer's run at grass, accounting most satisfactorily for each. I took the liberty of putting the question to him, whether he had known a case of navicular disease in the *hinder* foot? which he answered in the negative; but the why or the wherefore, neither he, nor do I believe any one else, can say.

I was likewise introduced to Mr. Lowe, agricultural professor in the College of Edinburgh, and attended one of his lectures, having been previously conducted by him through the rooms in which the various models of implements, species of grain and vegetables, are displayed; and being of Lord Bacon's opinion, that the true end of science is to enrich human life with useful arts and inventions, I considered it a most interesting sight. But I believe I should have described my visit as one to "The Agricultural Museum," which these premises are called, and deservedly so, for they contain a vast collection of objects, highly interesting to the naturalist, as well as to the practical agriculturist. Among the implements, a hay-cutter and an angle harrow—the latter especially attracted my notice; and there was a curious selection of wheats, amongst them the Triticum Hibernum, Hunter's, and the Blood-red. Of potatoes, for cattle-feeding, there were such as I never before saw; for example, the pink-eyed dairy-maid, weighing very nearly five pounds each, with the Irish lumper, and Wellington red, very nearly as big.

The lecture delivered this day by Professor Lowe, happening to be on the common topics of Scotch agriculture, with which, from the circumstance of my having had a Lothian bailiff four years in my service, when residing in Hampshire, I am very well acquainted, was generally void of interest; but there was one point discussed by him, which I listened to with much attention, and also with much pleasure. It was on the gene-

ral bad culture of field-peas—the Professor closing his remarks by saying that "unless they were differently cultivated to what they, for the most part, are, even in Scotland, it would be far better not to grow them at all" —an avowal which was received by the audience with evident marks of satisfaction, as well as with actual applause. For my own part, with the exception of the immediate neighbourhood of London, it is my firm conviction, that out of every thousand acres of field-land under peas, nine hundred have not derived the slightest benefit from the culture of them, but have been left fouler than they were previously to being planted with them—particularly under the broad-cast system, so often practised in the south.

Although, as I have before said, I kept no chronological memoranda of my proceedings in this seat of learning, eloquence, and philosophy, still the recollection of one day is too strongly impressed on my mind, to make me at a loss to name it. It was Thursday, the 22nd of January, which I may venture to mark as a day of honour, having been called upon, at my hotel, by the following distinguished individuals, viz. Professors Wilson and Cheape, who came together; Professor Napier; Mr. Black, the great publisher; and Mr. Stephens, the editor of the Quarterly Journal of Agriculture, who paid me the compliment of telling me, that, if I wrote any thing on the agriculture of Scotland, he should be happy to have it for the Journal.

The mention of this Journal reminds me of another very eminent character, whose acquaintance I made in Edinburgh. This was the late Sir John Sinclair, my introduction to whom was this: Soon after my arrival in France, I published a small pamphlet, addressed to the agriculturists of Great Britain, showing the effects of what is called "Peel's

Bill" on the Agricultural Interest, and that it could never rise again under its grinding operation. This pamphlet having been twice reviewed in the British Farmer's Magazine, attracted the notice of Sir John, who wrote me a note from Brown's hotel, Palace-yard, London, dated June 9, 1831, highly expressive of his approbation of it. But, alas! the season for seeing this extraordinary character had passed by. The lamp of life was then glimmering faintly; and although there were no indications of disease, there was a languor in his speech and action that showed his race was nearly run. But what a race has it been? From a short memoir of him in Fraser's Magazine, February, 1836, and other accounts published of him in newspapers, it appears to have been for nothing less than the prize of immortality, having, (to use his own words,) " with the exception of great conquerors and legislators, made himself more *universally* celebrated in all quarters of the globe, than any other man of modern times,"—perhaps he might have added of ancient ones.

After breakfasting with him at his house in George-street, I spent an hour one morning very agreeably with Sir John Sinclair, in his study, at the expiration of which he put into my hand a bundle of small pamphlets written by himself; also the portraits of eight persons who had attained extreme age, which illustrate his work on health and longevity; and the autographs of no less than thirty-five great men of all nations—princes, presidents, nobles, ministers, ambassadors, and agriculturists. All these now lie before me. The pamphlets, in addition to a general knowledge of the subjects, show the zeal with which they were composed —especially the one on the currency question, *prefaced by a prayer*. The portraits inform us of one sad truth, namely—that the older we get, the *plainer* we get; and the autographs, that the higher we are bred the worse we write, for the only name of the whole lot that we could read, as we run,

is that of John Collett, a Norwegian farmer! As to those of the Prince de Castelcicala, and Count Alexis Dorlow Cesmenskoy, I would give you a week to decypher either of them; and that of M. La Harpe, preceptor to the Emperor Alexander, is a happy illustration of what I have advanced on the graphic art, for such a scratch was never seen by a pupil, still less by a master. Luckily, there is a glossary given of them with the list.

I must not omit to mention that, exclusive of the above, Sir John gave me a small portrait of himself, which I shall have put into a frame when I return to England. Beneath it, are the following words, of which the right honourable baronet's countrymen must feel proud: "*Founder of the Board of Agriculture.*" It was in 1793, I believe, that he applied to Parliament for the small sum of 3000*l.* wherewith to found this admirable institution; and, of one hundred and twenty-seven members, who were in the house, twenty-six were against the grant!! Sir John was undoubtedly the most zealous friend and promoter of agriculture that Great Britain has ever yet seen; and what, but agriculture, is the *certain* source of wealth, strength, and independence? Commerce flourishes by circumstances, (witness the past year) precarious, contingent, transitory, and as liable to change as the winds that waft it to our shores. On this consideration then, as well as on many others, will the name and memory of Sir John Sinclair be handed down to posterity with honour and applause, and those but little impaired by his having been charged with *one* of the common infirmities of our nature—the love of fame. In my eyes, his character bears a strong resemblance to that of the Consul Pliny; and I think the public would be satisfied, if all our men of high rank and large property were modern Plinys. He had a thirst for applause, which he also merited; and what is it, after all, but a strong motive to do that which we think may deserve praise? A man

may court esteem by an imitation of exalted worth, but I have yet to see the man who has obtained it.

January 27. The morning was dark with a drizzling rain, when I mounted the box of the Defiance coach, so sat by the side of Lambert, the coachman, for the first two stages, and then drove it to Forfar, on my return to Burnside. I liked his workmanship much (he had been an old mailer, in the south it appeared), and I found he had plenty of nerve so necessary on a fast coach. I had, also, an opportunity of seeing his *powers* of coachmanship put to the test, for, "we boarded a cart," as the sailors say, the driver of it being fast asleep, and the horses having taken the wrong side of the road; and, but for good coachmanship, we should have had what is called "a case." I was, however, pleased, not only with the manner in which he got his coach out of danger, but with his promptness of action at the moment, which showed he was not flurried. After hitting his off wheel horse *very hard*—and it was his answering the whip as he did that saved us—he gave the carter a back-hander with his double-thong across his face, that I think he will remember even if he should live to be as old as my next-door neighbour but one—a woman *who saw her hundred and second birth-day, last Christmas day*, but who never, as she says, witnessed so extraordinary a winter as this. When I pulled up at Forfar, I found my hack awaiting my arrival; and before I mounted him, penned these words in my note book. "Drove the Defiance from Kinross to Forfar. The pace capital, but the road bad. Think *whin-stone*, as it is called, a better material for road-making than *granite*."

The weather being open, I commenced hunting with Mr. Dalyell, the next day; and on our arrival at the cover, was delighted at meeting a

gentleman whom I had never before seen in the field, but for whose character as a sportsman I had the highest respect, from the unanimous testimony borne to it by the best judges in Scotland, touching the essential properties of a sportsman. It is true, I had previously known and made mention of this gentleman as a horseman and a steeple-chase rider, but the degrees of excellence in one and in the other of these pursuits, are not to be named on the same day, neither are they indeed at all a-kin to each other. I allude to Mr. Archibald Douglas, so much better known as "Archy Douglas"*—brother to the late Mr. Douglas, of Brigton, in Forfarshire, also a sportsman whose decease took place a short time back—and who was brought to Melton Mowbray, by the late Lord Kennedy, to ride Radical against Mr. Horatio Ross, on Clinker, in the celebrated steeple-chase over Leicestershire, in 1829. Mr. Archibald Douglas not having taken up his hunters this winter, I only occasionally saw him in the field in Scotland, but I saw enough of him to convince me, that all I heard of him as a sportsman was true. I put him quite at the top of the tree, believing that he knows the science of hunting *as far as it can be known.*

As a horseman, riding from twelve to thirteen stone, I need say no more of "Archy Douglas," than to mention a few extraordinary feats performed by him; for from John o'Groats to the Land's End, his name is up; and, as was said of Mr. Robert Canning, in the Epwell-hunt poem,

> "Let him ride what he will, either hunter, or hack,
> He is certain to be on good terms with the pack"

* Perhaps I should call him "Captain Douglas," for *I believe* he still holds that rank in the army, in which he saw much service, distinguishing himself on several occasions.

This, indeed, is the peculiar feature in his horsemanship over a country; it appears to matter little what sort of a horse he rides, provided he has some "go" in him, for his hand is so good, his seat so strong, his nerve so well-braced, and his temper so fine, that he generally keeps them on their legs. But his feats! Why I think the two following can scarcely be beaten by any man. He rode a steeple-chase with three ribs broken, almost at the start; and getting a fall into a brook, when in his usual place in a run, he suffered his horse to drag him eight yards under water rather than lose his hold of him, by which he might have lost that place. The motto of the family—very ancient in Scotland—is appropriate. "Who never backward looks, but onward goes."

Archy's eldest brother, the laird of Brigton, dropped into his grave a few months back. I have called him a sportsman, which he was, but in my opinion, as to fox-hunting, only to a certain extent. In his love of it I should say he was exceeded by no one; but he never appeared to me to be quite satisfied in his own mind of what hounds were doing, neither had he the fine ear of "Archy." As a horseman, I was told he was first-rate; indeed, when I was in the field with him, past his sixtieth year, no man need, or did, ride harder—too hard, in fact, sometimes for the hounds, which he was rather given to press. But let me remember—"de mortuis." The laird of Brigton was an enthusiastic lover of fox-hunting, a jovial companion, and game to the back bone. It was only a short time before I became acquainted with him, that he had been riding a steeple-chase amongst a lot of young fellows, two of them his own nephews, in which he was second, over a very strongly-fenced country.

Almost the last conversation I had with the laird of Brigton, affords

an anecdote worthy of recital, being creditable to, if not characteristic of, a wealthy London tradesman. On my remarking to him the good fit of a new Whippy saddle on which he was riding, he related the curious fact of the late Mr. Whippy having left directions in his will, "that no bill, for goods furnished, *should ever be sent* to Mr. Douglas of Brigton." During my visit to Scotland, I rode more than forty hunters, besides those I hired in Edinburgh, and I am quite sure more than twenty of them were saddled and bridled by Messrs. Whippys, as if it were a verification of the adage, that "one good turn deserves another."

I regret that I have nothing to say of our sport this morning with Mr. Dalyell, and the want of which I particularly regretted at the time, as I rode a young grey horse of his, which was quite *au fait* at the high walls, with a ditch on one side or the other, of the country which we drew over; and I was also anxious to see the performance of Archy Douglas, who rode a clever thorough-bred horse of the laird's. We had his company, however, in the evening, as well as that of Captain Rait, formerly of the 15th Hussars—whose extraordinary match when quartered at Brighton, with Mr. Kemp of Kemp-town, I went thither to be umpire to—since, Colonel Rait of the British Legion Cavalry in Spain; and, now, the laird of Arniston, near Montrose, where, if he will take my advice, he will remain, and enjoy the comforts he has got about him. Of Captain Rait as a sportsman, it is unnecessary for me to give my opinion, but as a straightforward hard rider and good horseman, he is quite in the first class, and to the extent of his stud, I considered him to be the best mounted man I saw in Scotland. One of his two famous bay horses, which—horresco referens!—I hear he took to Spain, to ride as a charger, would, I have reason to believe, have fetched *the highest* figure at Melton, that year; but on my stating my belief that such

would prove to be fact, his owner told me that "no money would purchase him."

January 29. Still out of luck as to getting that sort of run with Mr. Dalyell, which would afford matter for the pen, or, in the language of the broad sheet, for, a "truly graphic description," which, for the master's sake I would have attempted to give, although I might not have succeeded. Still the hunting of this day enables me to mention two circumstances interesting to sportsmen, and one of them strongly corroborative of an assertion once made by me, in print, namely, that luck has not more to do with the game of hazard than with fox-hunting. Our first draw was a very pretty woodland cover of about ten acres, a little to the right of the Aberdeen and Edinburgh road, and always, I understood, a sure find. It proved so to-day, for in ten minutes after the hounds were thrown into it, I, among others, viewed the fox away. As soon as he had got two fields clear of the cover, we gave Mr. Dalyell the office, and away he came with the pack at his heels, (taking a gate on his road, by the bye, with his horn in his mouth, and followed by Skinner,) but they were as silent as if asleep, when they got on the headland which he had run along. "What can this be?" inquired their huntsman, "*who saw the fox?*" "We *all* saw him," said the laird of Brigton. Dalyell tried on, aye, on the very line to an inch, and not a hound spoke. Tried the field beyond; still no scent, and no crowd near them. "*What can this be?*" said Dalyell, jumping into a large fallow field, and trying across it; when, as though all their heads were tied together, they turned short to the left, took up the scent in a furrow, and ran as hard up to a cover on a hill, about two miles distant, as they ever ran in their lives—in short, with a breast-high scent!

Now for my comment on this event. Had no one seen this fox, it is evident he would not have been hunted a yard beyond the cover, because the hounds had a fair chance given them to do so, over two fields, and those favourable ones for scent; the game was not two minutes a-head, neither were the hounds hurried nor blown when laid on. The huntsman would naturally have turned back in despair. But the fact was, as I shall presently show, there was not an atom of scent that day, *down wind*, although the best mounted man, or hardest rider in Scotland, would not deserve a better than these hounds had when they took the scent in the furrow, *up wind*; and had it not been for the cover, at the end of two miles, no fox could have stood their pace many minutes longer.

Now then for the proof of this assertion, respecting one among the many phenomena of scent. It happened that I again viewed the fox away from the cover into which we had run him, and again gave Mr. Dalyell the office. To make the matter still more clear, the fox had gone down a large grass field, close under the wall; nevertheless, although the pack actually trod in his very pad-steps, not a hound spoke until they had got to the bottom of the enclosure, when they hunted him slowly, in a small patch of gorse, but were never able to get up to him, as he continued going down wind. If ever I venture to write on scent, I shall have something to say on this especial circumstance, not only because I have at times seen hounds run so hard down wind, but from some experiments I have made on the effect of a current of air, in conveying certain odours. Mr. Dalyell mounted me this day on Jack Orville.

There is one day's hunting with these hounds of which I find no

mention in my note-book ; but it occurs to my recollection from two or three circumstances connected with it. First, I rode that capital hunter Tom Thumb, since sold by Mr. Dalyell, to the Duke of Beaufort; secondly, that we ran one fox over part of the Grampian hills; and, lastly, that we had the usual luck of this part of Scotland, in running two foxes to ground, one of which, being close to a farm house, was dug to and killed soon after he was bolted. The scent was wretchedly bad, and a bitch called Goneril, was the only hound in the pack, that at one particular check would own it, on a dry path, in a lane, and on very light ground. "Oh, Goneril," says Albany, in Lear, "you are not worth the dust which the rude wind blows in your face." Mr. Dalyell must have been of a different opinion, when he cheered *his* Goneril this day.

A gentleman dined with us in the evening at Burnside, whose name stands high in Scotland—Mr. Guthrie, of Guthrie ; and there was another of Mr. Dalyell's guests, during this visit to him, especially invited to meet me, and who is really worthy a niche in the gallery of sporting characters. This was the celebrated Forfarshire Yeoman, of whom I have before spoken, as having witnessed, and given an account of the phenomenon of the "twa geese on one dish," at Captain Barclay's annual-sale blowout at Ury. His name is Proctor, but generally known as "*Jock* Proctor," to distinguish him from his brother—and brother bachelor too—who resides in the same house with him, and assists in the management of a large and fine farm which lies contiguous to the great road from Forfar to Edinburgh. But Jock has another farm, which he took many years back on a long lease, from the late Duke of Gordon, and he has so improved it by good management, that he receives from the under-tenant the sum of 365*l.* per annum, over and above what he

pays for it; or, to use his own words, he gets "a poond by it every time he puts on his breeks."

But Jock is a fine sample of the real British Yeoman, a character which, when original, and not diluted with the affectation of the gentleman, I very greatly admire; and I greatly question whether there is a much more useful one, within the whole pale of society. Of Jock's respectability one proof will be sufficient. He was in great favour with the late Duke of Gordon all his life; and his Grace never passed his door on his road to London, or from it, without greeting his old friend and brother sportsman, Jock Proctor, with a "How do you do?"

But I must attempt a sketch of Jock Proctor. His age I should take to be between fifty and sixty, and his person of that form which appears intended to defy Time. He has a fine head of hair, which was only then beginning to turn grey; and a countenance betokening a mind at ease, and in perfect good humour with all mankind. Whether in his youth he did apply hot and rebellious liquors to his blood, it is not in my power to say; but this I can say, he will drink whiskey toddy *now* with any man in Scotland; and he formed a very poor opinion of me, because I could get no further than the third tumbler, after our wine, whilst he reached his eighth! "What the deil are ye made of, Nimrod?" he would say, every time he made a fresh glass, "ye're nae mon for Scotland, at a'." It would then be, "Come, Nimrod, what are ye aboot mon; ye'll hae the cauld (cold) in your stomach after a' that claret ye've been drinking." His start homeward in his gig was one of the richest order. Luckily for himself, his servant was coachman; but whether he was as well shoed-up as his master, or whether the horse bolted, is not in my power to determine, yet certain it is they were all

but capsized, almost as soon as they left the door, Jock calling out at the time, "Will this do for ye, Mr. Nimrod?" as though he were performing some wonderful feat. But such are the men who do these things with impunity. The early hours they generally keep, the vivifying effect of the air they breathe, and the exercise they take in it, neutralize the poison of the evening cup, and, although "with an hue as florid as vermilioned Jove," a healthier looking man than Jock Proctor is, I should think not easily found at his age. Then I was much amused with his conversation, as well as forcibly struck with the general propriety of his remarks, delivered in his own peculiar style. But it is this "own peculiar style" that gives them peculiar force. I should say of Jock, that, what his heart thinks his tongue speaks, and, as our immortal bard says of a sturdy Roman general, "he would not flatter Neptune for his trident." Still, if all be true that is told of him, he can whisper soft things in a female ear.

February 2. Out of luck again with Mr. Dalyell—short running foxes, foiled ground, and no scent to force them off it. The finish, too, was a bad one, and I mention it as a caution. There was a couple of hounds from the Duke of Cleveland's kennel, out this day, who, never having seen roebuck, got tied to the scent of one in a large cover, where they could not well be got at, and two or three more of the pack were induced to join cry with them. Just, however, as Mr. Dalyell had got all but these few rioters at his horse's heels, outside the cover, and Skinner was on the point of stopping them, holloas were given by two of the field who were standing close to my side at the moment, but at some distance from Mr. Dalyell, the consequence of which was *every hound dashing into the cover again in a second or two.* Those who have hunted with Mr. Dalyell, have him this moment before their eyes; those who have not, can

appreciate the effect on his, or on any other master of hounds' temper, which an incident of this sort would produce. Galloping up towards the spot where the culprits stood, the first question he put was, "Who holloaed?" "It was *not Nimrod*," for the credit of Nimrod I felt myself bound to say; and that was all that was said. The fact is, this was one of the numerous instances I have witnessed, not only of men calling themselves sportsmen, but of good sportsmen,—which both these offenders were, and much esteemed friends of Mr. Dalyell's,—so frequently not paying the smallest attention to what hounds are doing, except when they are running over the open, at the rate of twenty miles in the hour. As for myself, I had been for some time "on thorns," for the vexation my friend was enduring at this untoward event, the effect, as stated, of accident; and I must say, I was astonished at hearing the holloas given, when the riot approached us nearer. However, on a subsequent admission of the fact, all was right again. But it occasioned a good hour's work to Mr. Dalyell and his men, to get the whole pack out of cover again, after the cheering holloas by which they had been encouraged to do wrong. I rode Jack Orville, again, this day, one of the cleverest of Mr. Dalyell's stud, and often ridden by his lady. This circumstance, added to the fact of Walker, the Fife huntsman, being out, increased the mortification experienced by a bad day's sport.

After hunting, Sir Ralph Anstruther, Mr. Dalyell, Mr. Earle, and myself, crossed the Tay, and went to Mount Melville to dinner,—

> "So excellent a lodging nigh,
> Who in his senses would pass by?"—

and met the Fife on the morrow, at a favourite cover called Scoonie-hill, where our Forfarshire ill-luck followed us. Our very patience, indeed, was put to the test by the various disappointments we endured. First,

the morning was most propitious; secondly, Walker, on his best horse, appeared bent on mischief, declaring he would give twenty pounds for one hour, best pace, "over yonder country," pointing towards as fine a one for hounds, as any man could desire; lastly, our fox did face that fine country, with every hound on the scent of him, and a fair start for all. "By heavens," said I to myself, "but we are in for a duster!" as I saw Walker putting the extraordinary little chesnut at a wall as high as himself, and at nearly full speed too, not appearing to know or to care what was on the other side, where there happened to be a yawner, which the impetus given by the pace enabled him to clear, all but the hind legs, which dropped short. A more beautiful start, over a more beautiful country, was never seen any where—fine large fields, all grass, and nothing in our front to hang in, when death fell upon our hopes. The coward fox would not face it, and turned nearly short back, when the pace was not quite so good. This, however, gave him fresh courage, and once more he attempted to gain his point, which was evidently over the country I have alluded to; and he once more faced it with the hounds well on the line. But now for the luck in fox-hunting. He was met by two little girls, who headed him short back, and he entered the glen of Genaldy, from which, however, he was soon viewed away. Our hopes were now revived; we all got *another* good start; wall after wall was jumped as if made of Indian rubber, instead of the sharp-cutting whin-stone; in short, rival spirits were at work, Johnny Dalyell for the honour of Forfarshire (without a fore shoe); and Peter Hay on Corney, and Earle on a good one, for Fife. Whyte Melville and Walker for the pack; and the worthy, straightforward Sir Ralph Anstruther (who bye the bye nearly jumped over a wall and me at the same time) for all. And now comes the climax. In the midst of this exciting scene, the for once *cursed* whoo-whoop was heard, and our fox was safe in one

of those thousand open drains, which are the cause of so much disappointment in Scotch fox-hunting! I was again mounted by Captain Peter Hay on Sir Edmund.

The evening of this day made great amends for the disappointment of the morning. Our party at Mount Melville, which included Mr. Earle, were asked to dine at Strathtyrum, the fine seat of Mrs. Cheape, near the town of St. Andrews — a widow lady I believe. Like most widow ladies who give dinners, Mrs. Cheape gave us a sumptuous one, and to no less than twenty-one persons which our party consisted of, being on the occasion of the arrival of a newly married couple, her relations, who were present. And here I wish to correct a mistake, or, I should rather say, what might be considered an error in judgment, on a point I should be sorry to be thought deficient in. I was asked by the lady who sat on my right, if I did not admire the bride? I answered — supposing myself in France, "*passable*;" But the fact is, I was under a mistake as to which of the numerous young ladies in the room was the handsome bride, for handsome she really was.

Wednesday, February 4. Left Mount Melville with Mr. Dalyell, and met his hounds at Fotheringham-lodge, about eight miles from Dundee. The following account of the day's sport appears in my note book. "First fox, — thirty-two minutes, and killed. Second fox, — twenty minutes to ground. *Tres bien fait.*" So much for living in France. Time was, when I should not have used such mongrel language as this.

Thursday, 5. Left Burnside with "Archy Douglas," to dine with Captain Rait, at Arniston, near Montrose, on the great north road,

where I found the gallant captain domiciled among all the comforts necessary to a sportsman and a bachelor, consisting of a good house, a good cellar of wine, a capital stud of hunters for the size of it, and one of the most comfortable smoking rooms I ever entered in my life. Our party was not large, consisting only of our host, the honourable Captain Arbuthnot, the two Douglasses, Mr. Hay, of Latham Grange—his neighbour — and myself. It would be a waste of words to say we enjoyed ourselves in the dining room, but it did not end there. We adjourned to the said smoking room, in which I perceived the insignia of the soldier were mingled with those of the sportsman, and the whole thing was in keeping. And I also witnessed something *particularly* in keeping with the habits and feelings of the bold dragoon. Mr. Hay returned home at night, but, loth to depart, kept his gig at the door nearly long enough to have been indicted under the "animal cruelty act," for it was freezing very hard at the time, "Come, come, Hay," said Rait, "either have your horse taken back to the stables or else *light your pipe again and be off*." Here was the promptness of the soldier, and the good feeling of the sportsman, who always loves a horse; and Mr. Hay, whose good humour is proverbial, obeyed the word of command in an instant, although we were very comfortable and merry at the time.

Friday, 6. We were to have hunted with Mr. Dalyell this day, who met at a good place almost half way between Burnside and Arniston, but as the frost was so hard, and the ground sprinkled with snow, all chance of hounds meeting appeared hopeless. But here is an instance in proof of an assertion often made by me that, *after only one night's frost*, and particularly from the first of February to the end of the season, sportsmen should always go to a cover ten miles off, if they have nothing particular to induce them to devote the day to any other purpose, inas-

much as locality has so much to do with the state of the surface of the ground, as regards frost. At Burnside, fifteen miles distant, although further from the sea, there was on this morning very little sign of frost, neither was there any worth speaking of at the place of meeting, and Mr. Dalyell had a beautiful twenty-five minutes to ground.*

The morning of this day was passed, as it usually is, in the house of a sportsman in which sportsmen are assembled — first, with a lounge in the stables; next a peep into the newspapers, and after luncheon a walk. The walk however I dispensed with, not being provided with shoes equal to resist snow water, but I repented having so done, when I found that the object of it had been to visit the famous promontory on the coast called "Red Head," mentioned by Sir Walter Scott in the Antiquary.

Saturday, 7. Accompanied by the Arniston party. I hunted this day with the celebrated harriers of Mr. Hay, of Latham Grange, (distant four miles), and we surprised the Laird at his breakfast, at the refined hour of eleven, by which time his grandfather would have killed his last hare, and been expecting the dinner bell. Previously to our entering the house, however, I peeped between the palings at the pack. "Surely," said I, "I know these hounds; they are Sir John Dashwood's sort." Now I over-ran the scent here a little; they are not exactly Sir

* I received a lesson on this subject, which I am not likely to forget. On the day on which the Warwickshire hounds had the famous run from Epwell-house, immortalized in song, my horse went to cover, but I did not go myself, because the ground, where I slept the preceding night, bore the weight of the London waggon in the morning, without receiving an impression from the wheels, and this in the month of December. Now mark the sequel, — I slept in the Worcestershire vale, *my horse* slept on the Oxfordshire hills; and *the cover* where the hounds met, was the highest ground of all, which, one would naturally suppose, would have been most acted on by the frost, whereas it proved otherwise, and the hounds threw off at the usual hour. They lay the night before at Edge-hill, which every one knows is very high ground.

John Dashwood's sort, but I am quite certain they are Mr. Yeatman's sort, who bred from Sir John's blood, as Mr. Hay informed me he purchased them of a Mr. Vibart, of Amberd-house, near Taunton, which is within easy distance of Stock-house kennel. I must admit that, up to this time I have never seen a pack of harriers come so near the standard of excellence which Sir John Dashwood's possessed, as one I saw some years back in Mr. Yeatman's possession, and having rather the advantage of Sir John's in power. There were three bitches in Mr. Hay's pack, Restless and Laurel (red and grey pie) and a black tanned bitch, called Glory, with a grey pied hound, whose name I forget, which I considered fac-similes of the old sort—descendants, a long way back, from a draft hound of the Duke of Grafton's, called Tyrant, and others from his Grace's kennel. These hounds of Mr. Hay have excellent sport, generally killing, I understood, on an average between fifty and sixty brace of hares,—the last season before I saw them, they killed seventy-seven brace — *eating them all by permission*, except ten brace! They had one run when I was in the country, that exceeds in distance any thing I ever heard of before, with harriers, and especially over an enclosed country. It was estimated as covering an extent of fifteen miles, in which the hare swam a strong stream, and went straight through several large covers, before she died! Now, I always make a little allowance for distance stated in runs, and especially when stated by the master of the pack, who never makes the worst of things; but as the extent of country travelled over from point to point, was nine miles, and the extreme points right and left, at least four miles, as shown to me on the map, the extra credit taken, if any, could not have been much. We may set it down as a very unusual occurrence in the sporting world; and the only parallel one to it that I ever heard of, was a run with Sir John Dashwood's hounds, from the Slate-pits on the

Cotswold hills, which was said to have been one mile more. This however, was over a much more open country than Mr. Hay's run, with not a hedge-row in it, being all enclosed by walls.*

But now to the business of the day. Luck was against us in the morning. We had only one very sharp thing against a very sharp wind, and killed; but we had a very good finish to it over Mr. Hay's mahogany in the evening, as our friends from Arniston remained to dine, and I took up my quarters at the Grange, for the two succeeding days. Mr. Hay mounts himself and his huntsman right well, and I was pleased at finding his favourite hunter to be my namesake, Nimrod. His huntsman, whose name is Lawry, formerly lived with Mr. Murray of Abercairney,—(or "with *Abercairney*," I should have said, for the word "Mr." is not allowable in the mention of a Highland chief) — is a good man in his line, and a capital horseman. Mr. Hay, indeed, showed me one timber fence that he rode over with his hounds, the drop to which could not have been less than eight feet.

Sunday, 8. The Arniston party, the late laird of Brigton, and Mr. Dalyell, were to have dined at the Grange this evening, where an excellent dinner, and covers for nine, were prepared, but such was the dreadful state of the weather, that Mr. Hay and I had it all to ourselves — my host very much amusing me with some anecdotes of his neighbour and friend, Lord Panmure, in his sporting days, which caused me to lament that those days were over with his lordship.

* Sportsmen, who have long hunted a country, are pretty accurate judges of distance from point to point. It will be recollected, that I gave an account of an extraordinary run a few years back, which I saw with the Vine hounds, stating the point-blank distance to have been seventeen miles. My information on this head was gathered from some of the oldest sportsmen in the hunt, and on the ground being afterwards measured by the ordnance map, it proved to be seventeen miles and a half!

Monday, 9. Met Mr. Dalyell at Douglas muir, and had the honour of riding my namesake — a thorough-bred horse of great size, of the real Leicestershire stamp, and, thanks to his not being able to touch the ground with his mouth, owing to the depth of his body and his short legs, he had not been out of his stall for the last four years. But oh, what a day of trial was this! Not to the hounds and horses, but to the patience of a large field of sportsmen. It was something even more than this; it was in its results, perhaps, unequalled in the annals of fox-hunting up to that day. We found a leash of foxes, one after another, and *each went to ground, absolutely, in less than five minutes after he had broke cover!* A more tantalizing scene, to a well mounted sportsman, than that afforded by the last of these cowardly curs, cannot well be imagined. We viewed him away out of a beautiful patch of gorse, overhanging a small bank, and not two acres in extent, and he faced as fine a country as the most fastidious Meltonian would wish for, and, apparently, the scent was good. In the second field, however, he, after the manner of the other two, found his way into one of those large and long covered drains, open at their mouths, with which Scotland so much abounds, and from which the chances of bolting a fox are all but hopeless. As may be supposed we all went home very much disgusted, and in a storm of snow and hail, which, added to the disappointment of the morning, required the aid of some very amusing anecdotes of Major Wemyss to make it even endurable. Things indeed, were rendered even worse, by our finding another fox on our road home, in a very strong cover, but being perhaps one of the same soft-hearted litter, he could not be persuaded to break.

But really these numerous open-mouthed drains are destruction to fox-hunting in several parts of Scotland; and were I to hunt hounds, where

they so abound, my heart would be in my mouth in every field I entered. The gentlemen who hunt should subscribe to have them sought for by the earth-stoppers, and staked, which would require being done once in three years, with occasional inspection and repairing at the commencement of every season. Iron gratings would be most effectual, but they are liable to be stolen for the material, especially if made of wrought iron.

Tuesday, 10. Left Burnside with Major Wemyss, and drove the Defiance to Stonehaven, all but one stage, when my companion took the reins, and showed me that, what I heard of his coachmanship from Lord Kintore and others was true to the letter, for he not only "drives very well of a gemman," as the old fashioned coachmen used to say, but he would do for the Devonport Mail, and could no doubt bring em out of the Swan with Two Necks, Lad-lane, on a trot.* It was David Troupe's turn to be at work our way, and many a joke passed between us — not forgetting the captain's hard-pulling grey leader, whose head, perhaps in compliment to me, was this night "tied back," as David calls being driven with a check rein. On our arrival at Stonehaven, we found Captain Barclay with his dog Dan, in readiness to receive us, and in an hour from that time, we were seated at his dinner table, at Ury, as ready to do justice to his mutton, after our drive, as our host was after his day's work, which consisted "*only of a little moderate exercise*"— namely,

* This reminds me of an anecdote of a friend of mine, a very good coachman, but as his colour is *black*, I shall not name him. He was coming off Epsom Downs on a Derby day, with a slap-up team, belonging to a certain noble lord, when one of his leaders becoming a little hustled in the crowd, at "the corner," a man stepped forward and put his hand on the near-side horse's coupling rein. "Leave 'em alone sir," exclaimed my friend; "I can bring 'em out of the Swan with Two Necks, *on a trot*." Many of my readers will know of whom I am speaking.

seventy-six miles, on horseback and on foot, between breakfast and dinner! Major Wemyss returned the next morning, per Defiance, to hunt the following day with Mr. Dalyell, and I and the Captain were booked by it in the evening, as far as Aberdeen, on our way to Gask, to pay a second visit to Lord Kintore.

Wednesday, 11. At my last visit to Ury, the Captain had a Marquess for his guest, and this day a butcher from Aberdeen had the honour of a seat at his board, having arrived at Ury, in the morning, on business. But observe, reader! there are grades in the class of butchers, as well as in other ranks, and Mr. Williamson the butcher of Aberdeen — for such is his name and domicile — is one of the archons of that celebrated city, a man of large means, of high character, and as intelligent a companion as I ever met with in my travels. He is also a capital customer to the Captain, having, that year, paid him a thousand pounds for grass only, on the Ury domain, besides having, at that time, two hundred sheep eating his turnips. But what a noble farm must that of Ury be, to admit of all this, after the quantity of stock which the Captain keeps on it, of his own; and at this very time, besides his hundred neat cattle he had 400 Leicester ewes, and 800 sheep of various sorts, eating turnips.

We dined at the good old fashioned hour of two, and as we were not called upon to go to Stonehaven to take the coach till six, we had plenty of time for chat. As may be supposed, *business* was now and then alluded to, and amongst the many questions I put to Mr. Williamson, was his opinion of Lord Kintore's black ox, which was purchased by one of his fraternity at Aberdeen, for a hundred pounds, or guineas, and whose portrait, from a painting by Cooper, was given to me by his

lordship, when at Keith-hall. He told me the meat was of the finest colour and quality, beautifully "marbled" as the term is; also, that the roasting parts fetched two shillings per pound, and the boiling ones one shilling; that the fat on the sirloins was six inches in depth, and on the rumps nine, and the total dead weight—including offal—was, 2,877lbs.! So much for Aberdeenshire, its good farming, and its beef. Then the mention of Lord Kintore's name started Mr. Williamson on another tack. Speaking of him as keeping his fox-hounds, and spending almost all his income in the county whence it is derived, he finished his remarks with the following striking sentence: "These are the men," said he, "who, if they ask anything of their country *must have it.*" The name of another nobleman was introduced—the late Lord Kennedy, who was a near neighbour of the Captain's, and with whom I had the honour of a slight acquaintance myself. To attempt to produce a rival to the Captain in walking matches would be absurd—no man but himself, having, I believe, yet walked a hundred and ten miles in nineteen hours and a half; but the following account of a match undertaken and performed by Lord Kennedy, may be relied upon, as I had it from an eye-witness:—"A match was made for 5000*l.* aside, at Black-hall, Aberdeenshire, the seat of Mr. Farquharson, at eight o'clock in the evening, *after dinner*, between Lord Kennedy and Colonel, now Sir Leith, Hay, to go on foot to Inverness. The morning had been employed in riding to a snipe-bog, sixteen miles distant, where three guns bagged fifty-two couples of snipes, and eighteen of wild ducks. *They started immediately.* Kennedy went across the hills, and reached Inverness in thirty hours. Hay followed the high road and arrived about four hours later than his opponent: but Kennedy having leaned on a man's arm in descending a hill, a doubt was raised, whether he had not thus lost the match, and a compromise was accepted by him of 500*l.* The distance by the road is one hundred

and thirty miles!" Bravo Aberdeenshire, again. These are the sort of men to breed Britons from; not merely because they are themselves well-bred, and likely to produce sound and healthy stock, but because they are also likely to sustain the manly character of their country, which nearly alone makes them beloved by their countrymen.

At six o'clock, P. M., the Captain having put on his coaching toggery, and looking all over the coachman—we walked down to Stonehaven, and mounted the box of the renowned Defiance, for Aberdeen, the Captain working over the first stage, and myself the second; both teams excellent. The next morning I proceeded by the Banff Diligence to Gask, accompanied by a very pretty female called Harriet—a foxhound bitch, who was going to the Gask kennel "to see her sweetheart;" the Captain returned home, (although his horses proceeded to Gask), with the intention of following me on Friday, which he did.

February 12th. I arrived this day at Gask on my second visit to Lord Kintore, and found, among others, a promising young sportsman under his roof—Mr. Dingwall, of Bruckley, in Aberdeenshire, who had just left Oxford, whence his horses had arrived by a steamer, apparently very little the worse for the voyage. Mr. Whyte Melville was expected, but was obliged to postpone his visit.

The next day was a hunting day, but it proved one of those "inauspicious days" on which, Somerville tells us in his "Chase," other cares than hunting should employ our precious hours. However, we went to the place of meeting, and the following mem. appears in my book:—"Met at Graigstone. Found in Yonderton-gorse, a very Leicestershire-looking cover. After nearly half an hour he went away, and beat us

for want of scent. Lord Kintore tried hard to catch him, by casting for some main earths, but finding that fail him he gave up his fox for lost. Drew another gorse blank; when as 'the piercing blast of Boreas blew' infernally strong, all agreed it would be better to go home and hunt again the next day. A strong field out for the country. Rode the Duchess."

Saturday 14th. We had this day an agreeable addition to our party in the person of Captain Barclay, who arrived the evening before—leather breeches and all. But the history of these breeches! Why I think it is unequalled in the history of all the breeches in the world. Five and thirty years ago they were made for, and worn by that celebrated character in the boxing world, Mr. Jackson; but having on their first appearance on Ascot-heath race course, attracted the notice and admiration of the Captain, for their apparently enduring qualities, they were purchased by him on the spot; and, unlike the galligaskins of the poet Philips,

> ——————"which long withstood
> The winter's fury, and encroaching frosts,
> By time subdued, (what will not time subdue!)
> An horrid chasm disclose;"—

are not only still unsubdued by time, but when newly cleaned, are still fit to appear at any cover in any country. And where is the cover, or what the country in which they have not appeared? And where the breed of bucks that furnished the skins of which they were made? And how were such bucks killed?—for surely their hides must have been bullet proof, if they were all as thick as those which composed the said memorable breeches. These interesting questions I am unable to

answer; but there are the breeches any day to be seen, and the Captain assured us he considered them good for at least ten years to come.

The fixture for this day was Dunlugas: found immediately in Mr. Leslie's new cover; ran very hard down it with a burning scent; the fox turned short back on his foil; could not stand it, and died. We were here reminded of the run in the Quarterly Review. "Do you hear a whimper?" said I, to Lord Kintore, "*like the voice of a dog in a dream.*" It was just this; it was scarcely audible, but in a second or two, the same hound challenged and the fox was found. How well would it be if man were to use such caution—not to throw his tongue until he is sure he is going to speak truth.

We found a second fox in Burchas-wood. After a ring round the cover he went gallantly away, and up to a moss—say fifteen minutes—nothing could be finer. Over the moss beautiful to behold; but no getting near enough to hear their music. Went slap through the moss, however, to Pladie-wood, where he hung a little, and then faced the open again; but his heart failed; he headed short back and died. Twenty-seven minutes in all. Lord Kintore got an ugly fall at a brook, but being himself landed, he was up again in a crack, and with 'em before they got out of the same field.

Taking a peep into his lordship's hunting book, I was pleased with the following passage in the record of this day. "Nimrod out, who rode parallel with me, with his keen sharp eye on the hounds, apparently awake to every turn, *and his soul in it.*" Then again: "Barclay ploughing away, and the promising young one (Dingwall) riding also to

the hounds." I confess I was surprised at the pace the Captain's horse (a grey of very fine form, and an old favourite), carried him the burst, as it was first-rate, and many large fallows crossed, which are no jokes with such a weight as his. He was absolutely at one time fairly running away with him. But what will not blood and bone and the grooming of old William Cross achieve! I again rode the Duchess. We had a party at dinner in the evening at Gask, and "passed a jovial night"—the Captain in great force, giving us, in the very best style, his old friend Tom Marson's song of,

> "I ride as good a galloway as any man in town;
> He'll trot you sixteen miles an hour, I'll bet you half a crown;
> He's sich a one to bend the knee, and tuck his haunches in;
> And to throw the dirt into your face, he never deems a sin."

Monday 16th. Met at Boynd's-mill. Drew Anchabar cover blank. Found in Tullow, and went away beautifully, but he turned short into Bog-side cover, a very large one, without rides, but with plenty of deer. Our huntsman finding he was not gone on, wisely left him, being aware of the allurement of *the haunch*, which is as grateful to a fox-hound, as to an alderman. We found again in Fortrie-gorse, and hereon hangs a tale. Lord Kintore wishing the fox to take a certain line, over a very fine country, ordered Philip to try and head him, but that was no go. "Forward," he went, where he listed, and made his point for Logg-hill cover, where, after a prodigiously sharp burst, a trifling check occurred. We, however, soon saw him break again, with about five couples of hounds on the scent, and here I saw our huntsman do, what it would be well for fox-hunting if it were oftener done than it is. "Get to their head, Nimrod, and stop 'em," cried Lord Kintore—blowing his horn back at the time, whilst he sent Joe to bring on the tail, who were still in the cover—"*let's have the body of hounds, or none.*" And hence

the glorious sequel! We all succeeded in what we attempted; and a most brilliant half hour—forty-one minutes in all—with blood at the end, was the result. The finish was indescribably fine. The pack, in a body, ran into him on the banks of the Doveran river, just as he was on the point of crossing it, and I had the pleasure of being within twenty yards of him when he died, having been capitally carried by a mare Lord Kintore calls "*Walker's mare*," so called because purchased from the trump of that name, who hunts the Fife hounds. The brush was given to me, and is now in my view, with this label appended to it:—"Forty-one minutes with Lord Kintore's hounds, in the Turriff country; very best pace, from first to last, with only one trifling check, and no cast."

Good as was the finish of the morning's sport, that of the evening was not readily to be beat. We all dined with Mr. Leslie, where we met a party of brother-sportsmen; and another peep into the Gask hunting book affords me an extract which best illustrates my meaning:—"The finish was *to a wish*, on the banks of the river Doveran—well earned blood in forty minutes. Dined at Dunlugas, with the honest-hearted Scotch squire. The pack hunted well and jovially together, and we passed a real good old-fashioned fox-hunting night." To me, however, this was a new-fashioned fox-hunting night, for I did what I never did in my life before—I tumbled down in the drawing-room. But what of that? It only proves the truth of Jock Proctor's remark, that I am "na mon for Scotland," in one respect.

Tuesday 17th. Lord Kintore, the captain, and myself, dined this day at Dalgety, the seat of the Hon. General Sir A. Duff, brother to the Earl of Fife, who did us the honour to come from Duff-house

to meet us. Moreover his lordship brought with him something to amuse and interest all the party. This was a lot of antique articles which had been a few days before dug up on the hill of Macduff; amongst which were a pair of bracelets and a spear head, and also some ear-rings, enclosed in an earthen jar, composed of what is called terra cotta, and supposed to have been placed where it was found for security, or perhaps as a votive offering to the manes of some illustrious person.

Our evening passed most agreeably, as indeed it could not fail to do in the society of two such lively companions as our host and his noble brother; but one circumstance of more than usual interest occurred, and particularly so to one like myself,—a stranger to the social system of the country; but one who is of opinion that the kindly influence of rank and fortune is never more powerful in its effects, than when extended to persons who have conducted themselves properly and faithfully in the capacity of confidential servants. It happened that on this evening the principal keeper of the Earl of Fife, and who had been for a long series of years in the family, arrived at Dalgety for the purpose of seeing the earl, and the general ordered him into the dining-room, where a chair was placed for him by his side.

Here then was a fine subject for a painter, as well as a pleasing scene to the philanthropist! Donald M'Kenzie—such was his name—with his long grey locks and ruddy countenance, which plainly denoted the nature of the occupation he had followed, placed in the seat of honour, and with a bumper of old port wine in his hand, pledging to his laird and the company in the full dialect of his nation, and evidently in the fulness of his heart. Nor did the agreeable interlude end here. Nothing could induce Donald to take a second glass of wine, such was the pro-

priety of his feeling; and after relating an anecdote or two of his exploits, and answering some questions which were put to him, he made his bow and retired, although not until he had been heartily shaken by the hand, both by Lord Fife, by the general, and by Lord Kintore as well.

Having spoken of old servants and in the sporting line, I must not omit the mention of one who is greatly entitled to my notice, being the oldest huntsman in Scotland. This is John Craick (commonly pronounced *Crack*), who hunted hounds in the Turriff country, almost ever since it was hunted at all; and for several seasons for the late Duke of Gordon, when Marquis of Huntley. Previously to my arrival in Scotland, indeed, I was told that I *must* see John Craick; and Lord Kintore took care that I should see him, by sending to invite him to Gask.

About an hour after dinner then, on one of the days I passed at Gask, and in the presence I believe of only Lord Kintore, Captain Barclay, Mr. Dingwall, and myself, John was ushered into the room, and seated by my side. His dress was just what it should have been—a red coat, a striped waistcoat, cord breeches and gaiters, and a white cravat, tied after the old fashion in a double knot, and confined to his breast with a shirt-pin, no bow being allowed in the strictness of this costume. Neither must the lower button of the waistcoat be in the button hole, to render the toilette complete. But now for John Craick himself. I could soon perceive that he was not a Scotchman, but from a bordering county, and I think by the burr on his tongue, he claims either Cumberland or Yorkshire, his early history having escaped me. His figure was just what it should have been, to ride well over a country; and he had an eye in his head which looked as if Time could not greatly dim it—although I should say, that nearly eighty summers had rolled over his head

before I saw him. John Craick's cup had not, I think, been "quaffed too quickly," neither was there "wormwood in the dregs," for he looked healthy and happy, although living, I fear, on a very small pittance in the town of Turriff, once the scene of his glory. Lord Kintore, and perhaps a few besides, occasionally send him a five pound note to comfort him, but I confess that when I saw him next day in his lodgings, it made my heart sad to see a good old sportsman not in a better plight. I have often thought that there ought to be amongst sportsmen, a fund supported by a small annual subscription, to provide for the latter days of such men as huntsmen and whippers-in, as well as earth-stoppers and keepers, of good character, who certainly run great risk of their lives and health, in furtherance of their amusement, and not always able to provide for declining years. The Whip Club had their benevolent fund; why should not sportsmen have theirs? I shall recur to this subject at another time.

When God gave us the grape, he did it in mercy to our sufferings, and we ought to acknowledge the valuable boon. A few glasses of wine made John Craick feel young again, and forgetting both his poverty and his years, he made us laugh "without intervallums," as Falstaff says. And some of our laughs were at my expense; for as John never happened to have heard of Nimrod, he would admit of no association of the word with hounds and hunting; and when Lord Kintore told him I was a sportsman, he seemed very much to doubt it, taking a glance at me at the time that was irresistibly ludicrous. Then some anecdotes of himself were exceedingly good, particularly one about a thorough-bred horse, for which he gave in those days the very large sum of one hundred guineas, and at the time when he was farming the fox-hounds, and mounting himself, and his whip, for three hundred pounds per annum!

It seems he one day mounted a young lieutenant in the navy on this horse with the hounds for the small sum of one guinea; and on the captain asking him how he could venture to put a young sailor on a horse of that value?—his answer was capital. "Oh," said he, "I knew what I was about. You must know this horse pulled like a bull, (pronouncing *pull* and *bull* as if there had been half a dozen letters *u* in each word), and as soon as the lieutenant was able to stop him, after we found the fox, he jumped off his back and led him home." John, it seems, won two fifties with this nag afterwards, and sold him for the money he gave for him. He also rode and won a match for 200l. a side, between the Duke of Gordon, when Marquis of Huntley, and a Captain M'Culloch who rode his own horse, four miles on a turnpike road. "Towards the last," said John, "the captain thought I was done, because I kept back as I used to do when I wanted to let in some tail hounds at the death; but I soon told him a different story, and threw the dirt in his face when I had nursed my horse a little."

Wednesday 18th. The fixture of this day I have forgotten, but what happened upon it I shall never forget. At the second fence, after we found our fox, the Duchess fell with me at a double fence, owing to the ground being false, and, in getting up, put one hind foot on the crown of my hat, and the other on my left breast. As may be supposed, this was what is called "a floorer;" for the mere weight of a horse's carcase on that of a man is bad enough, but when added to the effort of rising from the ground, as was the case here, it is almost more than could be expected that I am alive to relate the fact. Neither shall I forget the involuntary roar I gave during the pressure from the foot, which seemed as if it was about to pass through my body. However, on getting on my legs, and finding I did not spit blood, I mounted and got up to the hounds

at check, just in time to prevent Lord Kintore riding the third time at a high stone-and-mortar wall, which Skim had wisely refused with him, the ground being very awkward on both sides of it, and the hounds not absolutely in chase at the time. But here I was obliged to pull up, and the captain kindly accompanied me on my road to Turriff to the doctor, who by the usual precautions of loss of blood, &c., prevented serious consequences. But as related to my future operations in Scotland this was a sad damper, forasmuch as there was little probability of my getting sound enough to ride to hounds again till it would be time for me to return home; neither was this the extent of the evil. The next day but one, I was to have visited that kind-hearted gentleman, and most zealous sportsman, Captain Peter Hay, of Mugdrum, who had invited the *elite* of the Fife hunt to meet me. But what was to be done? As I could neither cough, sneeze, nor laugh, without suffering, it was useless to have attempted making such a visit as this, at the distance of sixty miles or more, so was obliged to forego the pleasure I should have experienced in it. The disappointment to me was great; and from the letter I received from my intended host, I am authorised in saying, that it was equally so to him. To make matters worse for all parties, a deep snow fell the next night, and put an end to the thoughts of hunting for some days to come.

Being about to say "good-bye" to Gask, I cannot refrain from speaking of the kindness I received from Lord Kintore, during the time I was confined to the house, from the consequences of the fall the Duchess gave me. I can only say, had I been his brother, he could not have done more. But have I no more good anecdotes touching this second visit to Gask? None, unless I describe a laughable scene between Philip the whipper-in, the captain, and myself, on our road home

together one day after hunting. Far from a wish to bruise the broken reed, but to restore it to its wonted vigour, the captain was relating the case of a whipper-in that he knew—a fac-simile of Philip, one of the cleverest of the clever—who lost an excellent place, under an excellent master, (tu quoque Philippe!) because he would get drunk. "*Did he, indeed, sir,*" said Philip; "dear me, how surprising!" But this is human nature, so well set forth in the fable of the old man and his wallet. We had another rich scene with poor Philip, one evening at Keith-hall, during our visit to the stables, by lamp-light. "Will you *promise* to keep sober?" said the captain to him. "*I will, indeed,* captain," replied Philip, in a very penitent tone; "I'll promise never to get too much drink again, if my lord will please to keep me." "You have heard of O'Connell, have you not, Philip," said I to him. "I can't say but I have," replied Philip. "Then do as he did," resumed I, stretching out my arm upwards, "*make a vow to heaven!*" when he actually went through the manœuvre, with his eyes turned upwards. But what is a vow when opposed to whiskey? Philip no doubt thought with Shakspeare that "the gods are deaf to hot and peevish vows," and in about a month from that time, he was drafted as incurable from riot, as we say of a hound. But don't let it be supposed that I mean to charge Scotch servants in general with the hideous and ruinous vice of drunkenness, which, as the immortal novelist and historian of their country says, "is the greatest bar to greatness in any way."

Having been told that Willie, Lord Kintore's groom, was a great admirer of Burns's lyricks, and that he sang one of his Bacchanalian odes with great taste, he was one evening, at my request, introduced into the dinner room at Gask, and at the word of command, gave us the beautiful ballad of

"The evening shade around is spread,
The chilling tempest sweeps the sky:"

The chorus to which,—

"Blithe, blithe, and merry are we,
Cauld care is far awa;
This is but ane night o' our lives,
And wha wad care though it were twa?"

is peculiarly heart-stirring and enlivening. To the science of music I am a stranger; but there certainly is a simplicity and pathetic expression in Scotch airs, that must be highly enchanting to a musical ear. Nor was Willie the only songster on the occasion. Joe Grant gave us "This day a stag must die," in very good style, and all agreed that next to holloaing away a fox over a good country, we had never heard Joe's pipe to so much advantage before.

As Jupiter himself was obliged to stoop to fate, even the great Captain Barclay cannot oppose its power. All chance of his hunting being at an end, and the snow in some places drifted so high that no carriage could approach Gask, he and myself, the fox-hound bitch, Harriet, and our luggage, were all placed in a cart well littered down with straw, and on Saturday 21st. drawn into the turnpike road, where we got into the Banff coach, and proceeded that evening to Aberdeen,—Lord Kintore also taking his departure on his hack, for Keith-hall. Next day, I dined with Sir Alexander Bannerman, maternal uncle to his lordship, and renowned for his convivial accomplishments, which imply the passing an agreeable evening under his roof. I also underwent a personal examination by an eminent surgeon of this town*, being by no means satisfied as to the sound state of my ribs, but the only damage they had received was, it

* Mr. Williams.

appeared, a trifling fracture of the cartilage, which I was much rejoiced to discover. The following day I proceeded to Ury for the night, and to Burnside per Defiance on the morrow,—an inside passenger, of course, much against my will, but either driving four horses, or riding after hounds, was each out of the question.*

I found a party of the right sort at Burnside—Sir Ralph Anstruther, Mr. Whyte Melville, &c.; and Captain Peter Hay, whom Mr. Dalyell calls cousin, as well as brother sportsman, was expected, but did not come from some cause which I now forget. And there was another gentleman there whose acquaintance I had a great desire to make, from the character given to me of him by Lord Kintore, which was this. "He is a capital sportsman, a first-rate rider to hounds, and an excellent fellow to boot, with some good old fox-hunting blood in him." I am alluding to Mr. John Grant, of Kilraston, Perthshire, elder brother to Mr. Francis Grant, whom every body knows by the established fame of his pencil, and especially in pictures in our line. Like the celebrated Hamilton of his own country, no man can touch him for costume, the propriety of which is every thing in a sportsman's eye, but which none but a sportsman can be correct in.

Wednesday 25th. An awful morning for hounds, wet and windy in the extreme. About mid-day, however, it showed signs of a change, and all the party—ladies included—except myself, turned out, but came back drenched with rain, having had little fun for their pains. The pack divided on two scents, running each fox *to ground*, the fate of full half the foxes I saw found in Forfarshire and Fife. The next morning, Mr.

* I am here reminded of a misprint in the last portion of my Northern Tour but one. For Lord Rodney, read Lord Ongley.

Whyte Melville, returned to hunt with the Fife; and on Friday 27th., I went to Perth, on my road to Abercairney, the fine seat of the Highland chief of that name.

There were two circumstances connected with my visits to Burnside that gave me cause for regret. One, that, in satisfaction as it were of all the kindness I experienced there, I had it not in my power to chronicle a series of good sport with Mr. Dalyell's hounds; the other, that circumstances prevented my seeing the castle of Glammis, which (to use the language of Sir Walter Scott*, "previously to the atrocity which under pretence of improvement, deprived that lordly place of its appropriate accompaniments,

> 'Leaving an ancient dome and towers like these,
> Beggar'd and outraged,')

was the noblest specimen of the real feudal castle, entire and perfect, that had as yet come under his inspection,"—to say nothing of its intimate association with the bloody deeds of its once royal owner, as recorded by our immortal Shakspeare. Still, of all the curiosities to be seen there, the one which would have most interested me, would, I think, have been the cap and bells of the professed jester which this family, it appears, was one of the last to keep. This race of beings is extinct, and no wonder, for few persons are wise enough to play the fool well; and I cannot say but I regret that they are extinct. They must have been an inexhaustible fund of entertainment, independently of their having been the only medium through which persons of a certain rank could ever hear the truth. I had a slight acquaintance with the late Lord Glammis and saw him a short time before his death, which

* See Lockhart's Life of Scott, for Sir Walter's description of this notable place.

I fear was accelerated by not setting more value on Lord Forester's maxim, that '*Tis the pace that kills.*

Having arrived at Perth on Friday, February 27th, I found a gig ready to convey me to Abercairney Abbey—the fine seat of James Moray, Esq., with whose brother, Major Moray Stirling, who has also a seat close by, I became acquainted during his several years' residence in Warwickshire for the purpose of hunting; and to whose stud, and their good condition, I have alluded in my "Letters on Condition of Hunters," in illustration of the benefits derived from the in-door system in the summer, with exercise.

The distance from Perth to Abercairney is about ten miles, which appeared shortened by the amusing discourse of the laird's coachman, Jemmy Reid, who drove me,—one of the old-fashioned sort of servants, who appeared as if he acknowledged but one God, and one master, in whose service he had lived since service he had been able to perform. It was delightful to hear how he considered himself as it were embodied with every thing that appertained to his earthly master, for it was *our* hounds, *our* horses, *our* property—he took great pains to show me where "*our* property" began, but it would have been, I believe, difficult for him to have shown me where it ended—and so on to the end of the chapter.

The abbey is situated within two miles of Crieff, the first town in this direction by which the Highlands are approached, in grounds of great extent and park-like appearance, although not stocked with deer; ornamented with good timber and a fine lake, at the head of which the old house stood; sheltered on the north by the Grampian, and on the

south by the Ochill mountains, of nearly Alpine height, and at this time, Soracte-like, made to appear still higher than they are, by their summits being capped with snow. But I had nearly forgotten one part of my story;—a notice of the fine vale of Strathearn, in which this abbey stands. It is thirty miles in length, watered by fine rivers, and filled with seats of noblemen and gentlemen beyond what is often to be found in any part of Great Britain. In fact, I reckoned a list of seventeen seats, amongst which are those of Lords Strathearn, Kinnaird, Lyndoch, Willoughby D'Ereby, and Rolls; Dowager Lady Baird; Sirs Robert Dundas, Patrick Murray, John Stewart, &c., &c., of the occupiers of which, or their sons, twelve take the field with the hounds. The gallant and sporting Lord Lyndoch has a large property in the vale, on which, as may be imagined, there is no lack of foxes.

But a word or two more of the abbey, for I can assure you, reader, it is well worth your notice, should your steps lead you towards Strathearn. It is a rich specimen of the Gothic, originally designed by Crichton, assisted by the taste of Mr. Moray—who, by the works which I saw in his library, has made architecture his study—and the late additions are from the designs of Mr. Dickson, of Edinburgh, successor, I believe, to Crichton. It is built of the stone of the country, peculiarly adapted by its colour,—which is a light grey,—to the chaste features of the edifice, and doubtless conveying to a chastened eye that calm and sober pleasure which arises from grand and simple symmetry. It must elicit applause, however, from all beholders, not merely by its effect, which is imposing to a great degree, but from a consideration of the labour, the cost, and the artifice employed in its construction.

My limits will not admit of a minute description of the interior of this

fine seat, but I must devote a few lines to it, if it were only to bear me out in what I have said of its exterior. I will begin with the entrance-hall, rendered interesting by an abundance of military and sporting insignia, of almost all ages, and all nations, intermixed with escutcheons of the family arms, which are supported by two eagles, with the appropriate motto, "Tanti talem genuêre parentes." The cloisters are one hundred and fifteen feet in length, on the stained glass windows of which are emblazoned the arms of successive Earls of Strathearn and Bothwell, progenitors of the house of Abercairney.

There are two splendid drawing-rooms in the abbey, one fifty feet in length, the other twenty-two square, furnished in the most elegant style; and which, together with a library, and conservatory, form a suite of apartments to an extent seldom witnessed in any private house; the dining-room is forty feet by twenty-three, just the proper size to be warmed, when it is wanted to be warm, by the aid of one good fire.

The present laird is a well bred one, being the fifteenth in descent from the first proprietor—the head of a family, in short, from which the Dukes of Athol, Earls of Dunmore, Mansfield, and Dysart are descended. He married a daughter of the late General Sir William Erskine, Bart., of Torrie, in the county of Fife, but has at present no family.

My arrival at the abbey was far from being devoid of interest. Whilst talking of Mr. Moray, of Abercairney, my Scotch friends, I perceived, always called him "Abercairney," but I little dreamed that no one about his own house called him any thing else. Guess my surprise then, when on the door being opened to me by a fine young Highlander, in the strict costume of his country, I received the following answer to

the question—"Is Mr. Moray at home?" "*Abercairney* is walking in the park, sir, but he will be home in half an hour." "Abercairney!" said I to myself; "what the devil does the fellow mean by calling his laird by this familiar name!" However, I was soon enlightened on the subject by mine host himself, and as I found every one called him "Abercairney," of course I followed suit. I was disappointed at not finding him in the kilt, when he came down, dressed for dinner, which I was told I should; but he did not wear it at all during my visit to him, in consequence of his having just recovered from the effects of a severe cold.

Abercairney having this day returned from a short visit to Edinburgh on business, our party at dinner was small. It was no sooner ended, however, and we had placed ourselves snugly around the horse-shoe—to be nearer to the fire, for one reason, and closer to the claret jug for another, and withal was just getting into discourse about hounds, horses, hunting countries, and men—than open flew the door, and in marched the same strapping Highlander, that had greeted me on my arrival; and with—not what Byron calls "the natural music of the mountain reed," but, to my ears, that "insult to the groans of a dying hog," as some one calls them—the bag-pipes in full play. The laird, however, declared he could not digest his dinner without at least a twenty minutes burst of pipe-music, and of course I had nothing left for it but to listen, and to endeavour to discover something like a tune in the burring drone, but that was "no go."

Of Abercairney's hounds, at least of the sport I saw with them, I have next to nothing to say that can either interest or amuse; for the weather was so bad that I only saw them once in the field during my

visit, and then without a prospect of sport; and, again, I was unable to travel beyond a trot on a pony, from the effects of my late fall. On looking into the list, however, which contains thirty-one couples of hunting hounds, it is apparent that, if they are not good in the field, the fault does not lie with their owner, for he has not only a strong pack for a three-days-a-week country, but it will be seen that he has spared neither trouble nor expense in going to the best kennels, north and south, for his blood. His first huntsman came from the Hatfield pack, to which he was first whipper-in, and was succeeded by John Arber, who was with him at the period to which I am alluding, but who, I have reason to believe, has left him, from the circumstance of the name of Hall being given as huntsman, in the list of packs printed in the New Sporting Magazine of January last. Hall, who was whipper-in to Mr. Hodgson, in the Holderness country, was Abercairney's first whip when I was in his country, and a very sharp lad second to him—twin brother to another sharp lad who was in the stables.

When speaking of a man in a professional point of view, he should always be judged according to circumstances, and my experience of Arber in the field is restricted to two days with Mr. Wyndham's hounds, when nothing happened to bring him into any thing like difficulties, and one day with Abercairney's, of which the same may be said. Nevertheless, the little I saw of him pleased me. He is very neat in his person, looks very well on his horse, and is quiet and respectful in his deportment. His hounds—I am now alluding to Abercairney's—were well under his command, and came, I think, as quickly out of cover as any I ever hunted with in my life. I should say Arber excels in this part of his business. He whistles to them a good deal when drawing, to which I see no objection, provided it answers his end, and it certainly

appeared as if his hounds liked it. In fact, I saw him bring them out of one cover and throw them into another across a road by the mere act of the whistle, assisted by a slight movement of his right hand. He is, however, only the second huntsman I have ever met with who had recourse to this simple expedient, and I think it rather belongs to the cock-shooter than to the fox-hunter.

Abercairney's hounds on the day I was out with them were quite steady from riot; not only from hares, but from roe, which I saw twice across their line, in view, without the least notice being taken. Not a head, indeed, was turned, even to look at them. I am now speaking of them in chase; but they were equally steady throughout a long blank draw, which I thought would have ended in a blank day. I also observed them hunting a very cold scent, in the meadows by the side of the Earn, too cold to be persevered in, but they afterwards recovered their fox, and ran him to ground, at the end of a long day, which I was not able to see the finish of.

I liked Arber less in his kennel than the field. I do not approve of feeding hounds as he fed them—merely drawing out a few shy feeders at first; then drawing the remainder nearly as quickly as he could draw them; and, finally, throwing back the door and letting out five or six couples, helter-skelter, at once. It is not a workman-like manner of doing business, and does not convey an impression of the presence of the faculty of nice discernment, or that high value set on condition of hounds, which should be, and generally are, the distinguishing characteristics of a good kennel huntsman. I observed also about him a little of that "heady confidence," which Dr. Johnson speaks of, in some of his proceedings,

which it would be well for him not to possess. It is a dangerous acquirement in any man, and justifiable in very few; for where there is no perception of error, there is no hope of improvement.

Of Abercairney's country I can say little from my own personal knowledge of it. It comprehends the whole of the vale of Strathearn, with the exception of a small portion to the east of the river May, which belongs to the Fife, and it extends to the westward until it joins Mr. Ramsay's country near Dunblane. The part I saw of it was coarse, but still, although interrupted by a strong river, not incapable of showing a day's sport with a fox that would put his head straight for his point, and go on. Abercairney showed me a line of country over which one fox led him, that must have been a choker to hounds, horses, and men—partaking of that *wildness* once considered a principal feature in a sport which has now, in the opinion of some persons, degenerated into the opposite extreme. It is beyond a doubt, indeed, that in some countries that I could name, and those considered crack ones, fox-hunting may be charged with the chief objection to hare-hunting—namely, the *ringing nature of the chase*, which induced the facetious Mr. Leche, of Cheshire fox-hunting fame, to say, that "harriers never run out of the parish in which they find their game." Still, Arber told me, that, wild as it appears to be, and in many parts really is, and choking as may be the hills, it is not so severe for horses as that hunted by Mr. Wyndham, over some part of which he declared no horse yet foaled could live forty minutes with hounds after a good fox, and with a breast-high scent. This is corroborative of an assertion made by myself, several years back, and founded on some experience of it, that no country that I had ever followed hounds over, puts the physical powers of the horse

so much to the test, *at all periods of the year**, as what are called the Brighton-downs, and those between Brighton and Lewes. Arber is qualified to speak to this point, for it is well known that he rode nothing which was not thorough-bred with Mr. Wyndham's pack. He, however, expressed himself very well satisfied with the cattle Abercairney mounted him upon, and told me he considered one of his horses the best hunter he had ever crossed.

After Saturday's hunting, our party at dinner was augmented by the presence of some of the laird's friends and neighbours, and amongst them Mr. Thompson, factor to the Earl of Strathearn—a jolly good fellow, who sang us two or three capital songs, and added much to the conviviality of the evening. But I was told the next day, that I had thrown a gloom over his countenance by a remark I chanced to make in his hearing. I had expressed a fear of quitting Scotland, without witnessing a game peculiar to it, called "*curling*," adding,—in allusion to the state of the weather, which had hitherto prevented me--that the preceding *Sunday* would have done well for it. Now having lived six years in France, it is not to be wondered at, that I should have thought at the moment that such games were played on Sundays in all other countries; but I was told that even the gong was not allowed to be sounded for dinner, at one gentleman's house, in the vale of Strathearn, on this particular day. Now, Sir Andrew Agnew himself cannot beat this; but I could not help asking myself the following simple question; namely,—"which of the two following charges should I most fear being laid to my account,—the witnessing a curling match on a

* I qualify this assertion, "at all periods of the year," by observing that there are parts of Warwickshire and Worcestershire, that will stop the best hunters in England in fifteen minutes, after a long frost.

Sunday, or, had I weighed sixteen stone with my saddle, which the worthy factor does, the having been all the morning on the back of a horse with fox-hounds, and then putting him into a gig, to draw me seven or eight miles to a good dinner, and back again, at night, as the worthy factor did this day?" I think I should most *funk* lest the ghost of the old grey horse might rise up and accuse me. "Funeris, heu! tibi causa fui?" was a question once put in the shades below.

But whilst speaking of the gong, which is the summons to dinner in most of the principal mansions in the north, I am reminded of an anecdote that Mr. John Grant, of Kilgraston, told me of a scene which took place at his house. It happened that two new female servants arrived on the same morning, and were together in their chamber when the gong announced dinner. Never before having heard such an outlandish sound—and there certainly is something striking, if not awful, in the long and deep swelling notes of this gong while ascending from the bottom to the top of a large house, and increasing as they ascend—they both mistook it for the "last trump," and were found in hysterics on the floor.

Sunday, March 1.—This being a *dies non* in a sportsman's chronicle, I have very little to say of it. We passed an hour or two in the kennel and stables; visited the neat residence of John Arber; and Abercairney comforted me by telling me the piper never played on Sundays. I expressed no surprise at that after what had been said of the curling match; and, moreover, from the recollection of the fact that, in the days of the covenanters, the sacrament was refused to a man who danced with his face toward a woman, and also to a woman who pulled kail, or scraped a potato on the sabbath!

Monday, March 2.—Weather horribly bad; hunting out of the question. The laird and myself went to dine at Auchterader-house, the seat of Captain Hunter, about eight miles distant, which had a curious appearance, from the fact of the mansion having been built, and lately built, on an open and commanding spot, previously to the formation of plantations, or other ornamental features,—there being scarcely a tree about the place thicker than a man's wrist, or a bush more than three feet high. The inside of the house, however, was wanting in nothing to make us comfortable; and we cared nothing, as far as ourselves were concerned, for the storm that was raging without.

On our road to and from Auchterader, we crossed two rivers, about each of which I have a word to say. We passed over that fine stream, the Earn, rendered celebrated in ancient history for having so often been dyed with good Scottish blood, in the wars of the Britons against Agricola, and their struggle for independance against the Roman arms; and, in more modern legends, for having been the watery grave of a clever whipper-in to the Fife hounds, who rashly attempted to cross it on his horse, when much swollen with repeated rains. He had previously whipped-in to the Worcestershire hounds, in Mr. Parker's time, and was a most expert swimmer. The other stream was the Po—not the Po which Pliny speaks of, that king of rivers which bathes the walls of a hundred cities ("Centum urbes rigat et placidis interluit undis") but that which Michael Bruce calls

> ——————"the gulphy Po
> That through the quaking marsh and waving reeds
> Creeps slow and silent on."

Now I had observed on our road to Captain Hunter's, that a new temporary bridge had been thrown over the stream; and that the

approach to the chasm made by pulling down the old one was left in a most insecure state—in fact with nothing but a low line of loose stones, placed almost close to the breach. "I hope our postilion will not drive us into the Po, as we return at night," said I to the laird, en passant. "No fear," was his reply. However, it appeared that my fears were not quite groundless; whether it were from the effects of the storm that was raging at the time, and directly in his very teeth; or, from an extra glass of something to fortify himself against it, it is not in my power to divine; but headlong should we have gone into the Po, had not the footman, who was on the box, just seen the danger to stop him in time. Four yards further, and Abercairney, the Highland chief, and Nimrod, would have both finished their mortal career, and at rather short notice.

Tuesday 3.—Nothing to be done in the field; the snow driving, and sleet, "deforming the day, delightless." When church and king time (as an old friend of mine calls dinner time, alluding to the drop of comfort after it) arrived, we had an addition to our party of a jolly son of Neptune, a half-pay captain, R. N., who sang us some good songs, and gave us some amusing anecdotes in and out of his profession.

On Wednesday, the 4th, I quitted Abercairney-abbey, and have only a few more remarks to make respecting my visit to it. The weather was unpropitious to sport with hounds; still as I was suffering from the effects of my accident, I could not have enjoyed it, had it been within my reach; but barring these draw-backs, nothing was wanting to real enjoyment of life. As regards the laird, he is a man after my own heart; overflowing with high spirits; without a particle of affectation; a jolly companion over the bowl; and,—as a Welsh apothecary

said of a brother-in-law of mine, who began the world with *ten* thousand a year, and ended it with *two*—"just the right sort of man for the country." What Rosaline says of Biron, in Love's Labour Lost, I may say of the owner of Abercairney-abbey:

> ——————"A merrier man,
> Within the limits of becoming mirth,
> I never spent an hour's talk with;"

and it will be neither his fault or mine, if we do not meet again within the walls of his splendid abbey.

My place having been secured at Perth, in—as I thought—*a coach* for Glasgow, on my road to visit Viscount Kelburne, I quitted the abbey in the same gig that brought me thither, to meet the said coach at the lodge gates, which open into the high road; and being ten minutes, or so, "before time," had that much talk with Jemmy Reid. He very much surprised me, I confess, by a contrast he exhibited in the habits, manners, and conduct of the middling and lower classes of the population of the vale of Strathearn, as well as of the neighbouring Highlands at that present period, and within his recollection, much in favour of the latter—the improvement being effected, as he emphatically observed, "by the example set them by their betters; by the exertions of local associations, by the aid of turnpike roads, and by the spread of the gospel in places where it was before scarcely known, at any rate very little understood." In fact, he gave me to understand—and I am using his own words—that the people had been changed from ignorance, strife, and poverty, to intelligence, peace, and comforts, within the last fifty years, to an extent scarcely to be credited but by those who have not been amongst them to witness the pleasing change.

Having been an inside passenger by the Perth and Glasgow drag, I

had not a good opportunity of seeing a strange country, which I admit I chiefly look at with a sportsman's eye ; and I considered a great part of that which we this day passed through, to have had a good fox-hunting-like appearance. At the end of about the fourth stage, guess my surprise when, the order of the day was—" Now, gentlemen and ladies, if you please, you will leave the coach here, and take the *boat* to Glasgow." The change, however, was for the better,—from a rumbling old drag, badly horsed, and worse driven, to a snug and warm cabin in the Edinburgh and Glasgow barge, which goes at the rate of nine miles and a half per hour, throughout the whole rout, drawn by five horses, which now and then were absolutely "sprung" into a gallop. The increased speed of this conveyance brought me to Glasgow just at five o'clock, and getting into a post-chaise, I reached Hawkhead, the seat of Lord Kelburne, eight miles distant, at the ringing of the first dinner-bell.

Hawkhead, the residence of Viscount Kelburne, is a large mansion, the property of the Earl of Glasgow—father to the noble viscount,—situated seven miles from the city of Glasgow, and two from Paisley, about a mile distant from the high road leading from one town to the other. The domain is extremely well wooded ; the approach to the house runs parallel with a deep river called the Cart, which, from its slow and silent course, reminded me of " gentle Severn's sedgy banks ;" the land is good, and the stables and kennels are at a convenient and suitable distance.

It is at all times, and under all circumstances, no slight trial of nerve to find oneself and luggage at the door of a person whom one has never set eyes on before ; but, from the character given me of Lord Kelburne

by several of my Scotch friends, and particularly by two of his noble brethren of the craft—brother huntsmen—namely, Lords Kintore and Elcho, I was pretty well at my ease, when his servants ushered me into his presence. A hearty shake of the hand and a welcome that could not be mistaken, operated as balm poured into my soul, and by the time the first bottle of 1815 claret was finished after dinner—his lordship and myself being tête-à-tête—I felt myself quite at home. But it is the characteristic of persons of high blood, and accompanying good feelings, to place their guests at their ease.

Lord Kelburne has two countries—the one, the home country, in Renfrewshire; the other in Ayrshire, which is, I believe, by far the best of the two. Of the latter, however, I only speak from what I heard, not having had an opportunity of seeing it; but in a letter I received from a friend, the following season, describing a run he saw over it, he spoke of it as being nearly as good as any he ever rode over in his life, and he has seen many good ones. That it abounds in pasture, I learn from what I read of it, and few persons have not heard of Barbara Gilmour and her cheese*; by the production of which, in the first instance, one of the Scottish historians says, "she performed a more valuable service to the world than Alexander the Great, or Julius Cæsar, accomplished by all their sanguinary labours."

Lord Kelburne's two countries, united, make only what would be called, in the south, one short one, because his seasons are short, owing to the backwardness of the harvest in that part of Scotland, which prevents his beginning hunting until the kennel doors of his brother sportsmen, in England, exhibit a fair share of noses. The average of stoppage, from

* Called the "Dunlop Cheese."

frost, also, is at least six weeks. Still, in the season in which I visited him, he killed twenty brace of foxes up to the 5th of April, which must be considered a fair share of sport, making allowance for *circumstances*, by which the character and performance of all hounds and their huntsmen should be judged.

Previously to Lord Kelburne, Sir David Baird hunted these countries; and after him, Mr. Oswald, of Shieldhall, to whom it will be recollected I sent a huntsman, named Butler,—commonly called *Shock*, when in the service of the late Earl of Derby—who gave much satisfaction the first year, but I never heard of him afterwards. The hounds had then three kennels—one at the mouth of the river Doare, in Ayrshire, where they remained in the non-hunting months; one at Cathcart, three miles south of Glasgow; and another, given to them by Sir John Maxwell, of Pollock, ten miles distant from Glasgow to the eastward.

I will now give my opinion of Lord Kelburne's hounds in a few words, and it shall be an honest one. I thought them, to the eye, equal to, if not superior to, any other in Scotland. And why should they not be so? They are the blood of two of the most celebrated kennels in England—the Lambton and the Beaufort, chiefly the former; but of their steadiness I cannot say so much. I found from his lordship—the theory is beautiful, but the practice, unfortunately, is inadmissable; the attempt, however, is most creditable—that he had all but abolished the use of the lash for the two previous seasons, by which means his pack had got a-head of him, as all fox-hounds will do, and the higher they are bred the more so. He had, however, altered his system, and, from letters I received from him, the following season—for the friendship Lord Kelburne honoured me with, by no means ceased with my visit to him—I found he had got

a new and active whipper-in; in addition to a capital draft of entered as well as unentered hounds, from the Duke of Cleveland, when his Grace reduced his kennel to thirty-two couples of old and ten of young hounds; that his pack was very much improved in their work, all of which was confirmed to me, in a letter from a friend, who had been hunting with them during the Caledonian meeting, held for that season in Ayrshire; and who thus expressed himself respecting them: "I saw two beautiful things with Lord Kelburne, during the race week. The first, twenty-five minutes, *superexcellent;* the second, an hour, over the cream of the country, and killed—*hounds as steady as bricks.*"

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that Lord Kelburne acts the part of huntsman to his own hounds, assisted by two whippers-in. His kennel huntsman,—who, by the bye, was educated by Tom Oldaker, and, as he informed me, held his horse *Brush,* whilst the artist took his portrait—has likewise been replaced by another, named George Knight. In fact, I have reason to believe, his lordship is at present very strongly re-inforced in every department of his hunting establishment, save his stables, and there was no need of extra force there, for, I think, I counted twenty-five hunters, besides hacks, almost all of which were thorough-bred, and many of them "not unknown to fame," having been good racers in their time. Amongst them was a beautiful little grey mare, ridden by the second whip, which won a stake of six hundred guineas at York; also May-day, who won the Fitzwilliam stakes, beating Dr. Syntax; and she also beat him in the Cup race, although she did not win. His lordship's own horses were all thorough-bred, except one called Scott's horse, so named from having been purchased from "old Scott," as the huntsman to Mr. Ramsay's hounds is called, at the stiff price of 250 guineas. Lord Kelburne's favourite horses, however, were Collier, by Comus, out of a Waxy mare,

and Daredevil, by Viscount, out of an Orville mare. He likewise rode a good bay thorough-bred gelding, whose name I do not recollect, and a capital hunter, called Jock. The name of the head groom, who has lived many years at Hawkhead, is, *Bran*, by no means inappropriate.

When speaking of Lord Kelburne as a huntsman, I must claim the privilege of only four days' experience; nevertheless, such are the numerous points of view in which the science of hunting hounds is called for and displayed, in even half that time, a less practised eye, perhaps, than mine, would be able to form somewhat of a correct judgment of the person who is called upon to display it. There are attributes, however, in the nature and temperament of some men, which, if I may be allowed the expression, half make a huntsman, and many of these Lord Kelburne possesses. For example, his zeal, and love of everything belonging to fox-hunting, appear to have no bounds. He is as regular in his kennel-hours as an old maid at her tea-time, and he is as fond of his hounds as they are of him. Add to all this, he is a person of acknowledged good abilities, which enables him to take advantage of *circumstances*, a point so much insisted upon by Williamson, and justly so, in a science which, like fox-hunting, is beset and opposed by them at almost every step. Then again, he is a horseman of the first class for nerve and straightforward work in the field, which gives him no slight advantage. That he erred in letting his hounds get the mastery of him, from motives of kindness and good feeling, he is himself ready to acknowledge, and it is much to be lamented that his principle will not succeed. Nothing more is true than that, hounds should be encouraged, not rated, to cry; and that whipping faulty hounds, makes good hounds shy; still, as there are in all packs many hounds that will do what is wrong, and very few that will *always* do what is right, the use of the

lash, and the rate, are inseparable from discipline in the field. There are points in which Lord Kelburne excels in his system of hunting hounds. His method of laying them on to a scent is perfect, and in his casts when at check, he appears to know exactly the time they ought to be allowed to try and make it good themselves; and this is a point of no small importance, especially in a country like the one I saw him in, where a fox has so many advantages over hounds. In drawing his covers, his lordship appeared to me to be rather too far from his hounds, which accounted for their once or twice slipping away with their fox, unobserved by him; but as far as I could judge of him in chase, and I saw him in some trying situations, he appeared equal to give them all the assistance required. His country, like most parts of Scotland that I hunted in, however, is calculated to keep every huntsman in a fidget, as well as to render his hounds both slack and wild, from the quantity of open drains which invite foxes to go to ground—a fact, that will not, I believe, be disputed by those who have witnessed the effect of disappointment to animals so sagacious and yet so impatient as fox-hounds.

To sum up all. I saw Lord Kelburne, as a huntsman, to disadvantage. His hounds were wild from the cause I have stated; the weather was wilder, with the exception of one day; his whippers-in were insufficient, which is proved by his having drafted them; and I saw him in a very difficult country. I saw enough, however, to convince me that, the two principal obstacles being removed,—namely, the want of discipline, and good assistance from whippers-in,—he will have his share of sport; at all events, the want of it will not lie at his door. What his kennel is now, it is only in my power to imagine, from the additions made to it, and of course a judicious draft; but this I will repeat, that a more highly bred and business-like pack, to look at, need not be in any man's

kennel than the one I saw, and for any country under the sun. If they could not have killed a fox in a good country, and with a good holding scent, I should have doubted it having been done by any others, come from where they might.

Lord Kelburne has a large racing stud, but I did not see the cream of it—Jerry being at Newmarket, let for the season; and Actæon sold to our late good king, for one thousand guineas. There was a clever horse called Albany, very likely to get hunters, several fine mares and colts, and Retriever and Retainer, by Jerry, both then out of training. And the mention of the last named horse reminds me of a circumstance much to the credit of Mr. Fryer, Veterinary Surgeon, of Northallerton, of whom I had occasion to speak in my Yorkshire Tour. He was sent for, by his lordship, to fire Retainer, with the hopes of his coming again to the post; but, doubtful of the effect, he declined touching him. "I must fire him *very deeply*," said he, to Lord Kelburne, "if I operate on him at all, and I candidly tell your lordship, I should be doubtful of his standing training, if I do." After looking over the stud, then, which he does every year, he departed without using his irons at all. There is a beautiful picture of Jerry, in the drawing-room at Hawkhead; also, of Actæon, with Harry Edwards on his back, beating Memnon, mounted by Chifney, both by Herring.

As may be supposed, there were several colts and fillies of all ages in the paddocks and boxes at Hawkhead, but there was one which was quite a curiosity on account of his size. He was by Jerry, out of a small half-bred mare, and only two years old; but of such a prodigious height as to have been, in my opinion, well qualified to be exhibited as a show.

I must now look to my note book, for my proceedings during my visit to Hawkhead, which I must preface with a few words:—it is a curious fact that, with the exception of Mr. Dalyell's, every pack I hunted with in Scotland, had a good run on the *first* day of my going out with them, which occasioned several of my kind friends to say, that I brought them good luck. That such was the case with Lord Kelburne, the following account, which appeared in the newspaper, of a run on Thursday the ninth of March, being the day after my arrival, will pretty clearly show.

"On Thursday last, Lord Kelburne's hounds gave a brilliant treat to their noble master and a small field of amateurs of this city. Darnly-toll, five miles south of town, was the fixture for the day; but the morning proving unpropitious, the meet was postponed till twelve, by which time some of the wintry appearances of the country had disappeared, and at half-past twelve the hounds were thrown into Auchinbeck, a gorse cover near Glandeston. Immediately heart-stirring notes proclaiming *a find*, and in three minutes reynard left his lodgings and broke away in the finest style towards Waukmill-glen, the fastnesses of which seemed to promise a retreat; but there he was not permitted to tarry. Accordingly, he sought Hurlet, meditating Hawkhead, but his friends in the rear merely allowed him to skirt this cover. Finding them somewhat troublesome, he boldly took open country, and gallantly charged the Gleniffer-hills, trusting to his own strength and their acclivity for shaking off his pursuers. Determined not to part with him, however, they stuck to it, and tracked their wily leader with unerring precision, vindicating their claim to distinction as one of the best packs in the kingdom; but the field now became select—his lordship and one or two alone gaining the heights at the tail of the hounds. Here the most admirable hunting was witnessed; for, in despite of snow and a cold wind, the hounds proved themselves good ones, and after an hour and twenty-five minutes, ran into a fine dog-fox in open field near to Neilston. It is impossible to ascertain the distance which had been gone, as reynard's course was anything but straightforward; but judging by the time, there could not have been less than fifteen

miles covered, which, considering the country ridden over, is sufficient for proving the condition of both horses and men, and such as but few of either, at the pace gone, can be found to stand. Early in the run his lordship was made a Baptist of in a deeply overflown ditch, and for an instant held rather an awkward situation, nothing being visible but his head and part of his horse; but fortunately he got extricated, and, sportsmanlike, despised the ducking, and held on to the end without a dry rag on his back. It is to be hoped that no bad effects will attach to his person, as we are sure this would be regretted by all true fox-hunters."

No doubt but this was a splendid run. Having viewed the fox away, I was tempted to follow the chase, but at the end of the fourth field was obliged to pull up, and content myself with following it with my eye, to which the nature of the ground was favourable. The pace was *capital*, the country very severe, being on the ascent, and the ground very deep, but from the head the hounds carried, I was convinced the finish would be good, if the fox would keep above ground. I should have liked Frank Grant to have been present when his lordship entered the drawing-room with the brush of the fox in his hand. His appearance, after his having been over head in the water, and well bespattered with mud besides, was quite of the "varmint order," and would have made a good study for the artist. With the exception of this slip, however, he was, I understood, capitally carried by Collier, and never many yards from their sterns. Harrison, one of the whippers-in, rode the biggest thorough-bred horse, this day, that I ever saw in my life.

Friday 8.—Became alarmed, and, after the manner of the hare, when she fancies herself near her end, began to think of home. At all events I wished to go to London for advice, but my noble host would not hear of my doing so; and, ringing the bell at the moment, the family doctor

was sent for. By the loss of more blood and suitable medicine I was very greatly relieved, and all apprehensions were removed.

Saturday, 9.—The hounds were to have met at one of their best covers, but were prevented doing so by a heavy fall of snow.

Sunday, 10.—Inspected the stud, in the stables, the boxes, and paddocks; and, in the latter, witnessed a sight such as I wish I could say was oftener to be witnessed than it is. I saw a lot of old hunters, turned out for the rest of their lives, and enjoying themselves at their ease—one of them a fine grey gelding, which his lordship told me he had ridden fourteen seasons, "never having turned him out in the summer," he said, "after reading Nimrod's Letters on Condition of Hunters." This, I repeat, is a most gratifying sight, and it ought to be more common than it is, with persons who can afford the expense. It is a mistake to imagine, that our compassion and care are confined to the miseries and wants of our own species; and it is by such acts as these that the intentions of nature are fulfilled, in mitigating the dominion of man over animals which contribute either to his wants or his pleasures. Lord Kelburne told me, he had never sold but one hunter. We had a party at dinner this day, amongst them some officers of the Carabineers, then quartered at Glasgow; spent a pleasant and jovial evening, which Johnson's Boswell says, is "as much as can be made of life."

Monday, 11.—The snow was partly gone; but this not being a hunting day, we rode to Glasgow for the purpose of seeing the manufactory of Mr. Tennant, who had dined at Hawkhead on the preceding day, and is a constant attendant on Lord Kelburne's hounds. But shall I not be considered to be romancing when I describe the extent of the premises,

as well as the operations carried on in them, at this manufactory of sulphuric acid and of soap? Their magnitude is expressed in a few words: Buildings, covered with glass, extend over ten acres of ground, and a hundred tons of coals are consumed every day throughout the year. We found the exhalations emitted, in some of the apartments we walked through, extremely irritating to our lungs, although Mr. Tennant himself did not appear to be affected by them, and several of the workmen were sitting at dinner in the midst of them—proving the truth of the adage, that "use becomes second nature." The sulphuric acid is chiefly for exportation, and was to be seen in great quantities, in jars, hermetically sealed for the purpose; and, as a single specimen of the capital expended in the making of it, we were shown one retort, of French manufacture, and holding only seventy gallons, which cost £1,400. It was formed of platina, the only metal which will stand the required heat.

Tuesday, 12.—Met at Houlston-gate, and found in a very fine whin cover on the side of the hill. It was a beautiful find, and the hounds showed themselves to advantage by turning very short back on the scent in the cover, and forcing their fox to fly the country at once. The pace was very good at first, and also at other parts of the run, which lasted three hours; and had his lordship happened to have heard my holloa, as I viewed him, dead beat, at the last, we should no doubt have killed him. This was the most difficult run to ride to that I ever experienced, owing to the ground being, as it were, checkered, that is, covered with snow in one place and bare in another. We often lost sight of the hounds altogether, when they would otherwise have been plain to be seen; and in short, at one time, they were invisible *to every man in the field*, although there was no lack of hard riders, and the country good enough for any thing. It was a hard day for horses; I rode "Scott's horse,"

who is said never to have fallen at a fence, and indeed I found him perfect.

There was a gentleman out this day, who rode hard and well, whom I cannot pass over, inasmuch as he pays a compliment to fox-hunting, which no other sport would receive—at all events, be entitled to. His name is Eddington; and having undergone amputation of one of his legs, above the knee, has had it replaced by a cork one, on which he wears as good a boot and spur as need be seen at Melton Mowbray. He is a regular attendant on the hounds, and rides hard.

Wednesday, 13.—The hounds met this day, and we drew blank, a good whin cover, called "the Round Cover," so called because it is circular and enclosed by a high wall. The country about it is good, but high; and as the day was most tempestuous, his lordship trotted away to Hawkhead, where we found, but could do nothing with our fox.

Thursday, 14.—Lord Kelburne and myself this day met a large party at dinner at the house of Mr. Delglish, a wealthy merchant of Glasgow, and residing in that city. I had this evening, after an excellent dinner and as much claret as we liked, a taste of the punch for which Glasgow is so celebrated, and excellent tipple it is.

Saturday, 16.—Met at the Bridge of Wier, and had a blank day.

Sunday, 17.—Lord Kelburne and myself dined at the barracks with the Carabineer officers, several of whom I had not seen since I dined with them in 1829, at Dorchester, and witnessed an amusing scene with poor Jack Hayward*, now defunct, who gave us an excellent imitation of Mr.

* Veterinary surgeon, and much beloved by the regiment.

Muster's finding and killing his fox. We had something to remind us of this day, on our return to Hawkhead. The post boy was so drunk as to suffer the horses to turn us fairly to "the right about" in the town of Glasgow. His lordship, however, took, I believe, the best means to insure our safety, which was, to "holloa him forward," all the way, for, said he, "if he goes slow, he will be asleep and tumble off his horse." I must confess I was not sorry to find myself safe at Hawkhead, for we went at an awful pace through the iron gates into the domain, with the river Cart just on our starboard tack.

The fixture on Monday, 18th, was Johnstone-castle, the seat of Mr. Houstone, who had joined our party at Hawkhead, and proved no small addition to it. We were unfortunate in not getting away with a fox, which led us many miles, with a very stale scent, over a capital country, all grass. We found again in the Hawkhead covers, and went quickly away, but being headed by some persons on the railway, he gave the pack the slip. I lamed a horse of his lordship's this day, called Jock, the only one I injured during my tour. Captain Gerard (brother to Sir John, and who returned with us to Hawkhead) also got an awkward fall, but escaped unhurt.

Tuesday, 19.—I was booked this day by the mail for Carlisle, but his lordship said "no go." The fixture was South-bar, but the morning was so dreadfully wet, that we were very late at cover, and the field small, several of the gentlemen who had sent horses not venturing to turn out. After this preface, I have little to say of the day's sport. We found in a cover called the Big-wood; I viewed the fox away, and after a short run, we lost him—at least as was supposed, but he was brought dead, to Hawkhead in the evening, killed single-handed, I have reason to believe, by Brusher, who did not come away with the pack, but

joined it on our road home. We found again at Raskeleigh, but the fox taking a very bad line, we could do nothing with him, and the scent was wretchedly bad.

Still I have an incident or two to relate. First, about half a dozen of us came suddenly, as we turned the corner of a cover, on some high spiked rails, placed on *very sloping* ground. I pulled up, as did two gentlemen who were with me at the moment; but seeing Harrison take them on his big chesnut horse, without a pause, and perceiving the foot-hold to be good, I followed him, and the gentleman with the cork leg followed me. I do not think I ever rode over a fence of this description before, and should not have ridden at it at all, had not Harrison taken it before me. Secondly, I have to produce a verification of the old adage of "Brag is a good dog, but Hold-fast is a better." Mr. Johnstone, of the Carabineers, on his great Irish mare, and myself, had been boasting in the morning, that, mounted as we were, we "would not be stopped by any thing." Alas! in the second run, we allowed Lord Kelburne to plant us both at a brook! And what excuses can be offered? For Mr. Johnstone—none, although the banks were queer, and Collier had dropped short with one hind leg. For myself, on perhaps the best fencer in his lordship's stud, only this—I was booked by the *up*-mail for the next day, and having been well dosed with calomel, I thought it probable, that a souse over head and ears, in this black brook, might have been the means of sending me *t'other road*.

We had, as was generally the case, the addition of two or three gentlemen to our dinner party this evening, and at about an hour after midnight they departed to their several homes. "Now, Nimrod," said his lordship, when we were left by ourselves, in the drawing-room, "we will

drink to our next meeting in one bottle of Champagne," and the bell was rung before I could have had time to have said "No." But I was not disposed to say "No;" on the contrary, although—if I may be allowed to paraphrase an injunction without intending disrespect to the author of it—sufficient for the day had been the *wine* thereof, I was delighted at this pledge of friendship and good feeling in my noble host, and newly-acquired friend, and answered, emphatically—"*With all my heart, my lord.*" Unluckily, however, the butler informed us there was no more champagne in ice, and a bottle of burgundy was ordered as its substitute; this being finished, we retired to our beds, and I know not how I can better describe our parting at the bottom of the stairs,—his lordship's road being one way and mine another,—than by another paraphrase of the following lines in one of Shenstone's pastoral ballads, to which, Dr. Johnson says, "if any mind denies its sympathy, it has no acquaintance with love or nature:"

"He gaz'd, as I slowly withdrew,
My path I could hardly discern;
So kindly he bade me adieu,
I felt that he bade me return."

But, to be serious. The frank and hearty reception which greeted me on my arrival was more than equalled in the kindness shown me on my departure, in wishes expressed for my repeating my visits to Hawkhead whenever I was disposed to do so.

At the early hour of five, the same morning, was I in a post-chaise, on my road for Glasgow, to be in time for the Carlisle mail, in which I was once more booked; and precisely in that state of feeling in which most respectable gentlemen of my age and habits would have found themselves after having been allowed only about three hours for the

insensible escape of all the effects of a good dinner and a jovial night, and a pint of stout Burgundy by way of a climax. In low life, I believe, the term used for this not very agreeable state, is that of "seedy," and so let it be. Desperately "seedy" was I throughout the whole day; nor indeed was I at all myself again, until I had felt the benefit of Chester Billy's recipe, and had "gone cool through the sheets," the following night, at Carlisle.

In my road from Hawkhead to Glasgow, I passed the spot on which the Glasgow and Paisley steam-coach blew up, a year or two before, killing some of its passengers, blowing off limbs from others, and par-boiling not a few. If my recollection serves me, the number of killed and wounded amounted to seventeen. With every acknowledgment of the superiority of mechanical over animal power, I told the principal proprietor of steam road-carriages, many years back, in Mr. Tattersall's yard, that they never could be made available to the road, nor will they ever be. Then again, between Glasgow and Carlisle, a circumstance occurred, quite in character with the place at which it happened. On fresh horses being put to the mail at Gretna Green—"that happy spot where the unholy hand of law has not yet plucked up the root of love"—the off leader *bolted*, at starting, and, jumping on the back of her partner, brought her down, with her, to the ground. Such confusion of this nature, I never before witnessed. One leader was on its back, and the bridle off the head of the other, who lay with her head turned toward the coach, and her rein pulled through the driver's hand. Now all this was the result of the want of coachmanship, and nothing else. The culprit, a fine young grey mare, apparently very well bred, wanted to get away quickly with the coach, but the mutton-fisted fellow would

not let her do so, and by holding her hard, occasioned what I have described.

On Friday 22nd.—I arrived at Merton House, in the county of Durham, the residence of that "acmé of a sportsman and a gentleman," as Lord Kintore calls him, Mr. Ralph Lambton, to whom I had signified my intention of visiting him, on my return towards the South, and I am happy to say, I found him in excellent health and spirits. Neither was I long in his presence before he put me on horseback, and we rode to the kennel, which is situated in the park of his nephew the Earl of Durham. Fenwick, the feeder, instantly recognised me, as also did Bob Hunnum the first whip, whom we met in the park, and in a situation, which, as Mr. Lambton allowed, would have just suited Frank Grant, as a study for a sketch of a whipper-in, on a non-hunting day. As for Bob himself, and the puppies he had in the panniers,* I consider them to have been above all price; the heads of the two beautiful little animals, with their coal black eyes, tanned brown, and velvet-like ears, which were to be seen peeping out of the panniers and nodding to the step of the old pony, little conscious of the value their owner set upon them—what a beautiful sketch, I say, might have been made of them! All young animals, or nearly all, come under the denomination of *pretty*, but there is something in a young fox-hound of this age, which is worthy a more significant epithet.

The pack had been fed previous to our arrival at the kennel—be it remembered these hounds eat no flesh the day before they hunt,—but we accompanied them in their usual walk afterwards, and they struck

* He was taking a lot of puppies to their walks.

me as being hounds of more power than when I saw them last, which was on my Yorkshire Tour in 1827. Their standard height, however, appeared to be about the same—namely, dog hounds about twenty-three, and bitches twenty-two inches. Nothing need be more perfect than they are; or more justly entitled to the high character they bear; but taking into consideration the length of time this pack has been under the direction of the master of it, and that he puts out from sixty to seventy couples of puppies every year, we cease to wonder at their being so, or that, in what must be altogether considered only a second-rate country, and interrupted by railroads, their average number of foxes killed for many years past, amounts to fifty brace! It is also worthy of notice, that the numbers killed by the dog and bitch packs for some years past, has been very nearly equal. It was one a-head in favour of the bitches, for that individual season—up to the time I mean of my last visit to Mr. Lambton.

On our return to Merton House, we looked over the stables, in which I counted twenty-five hunters, besides several hacks. I likewise saw the corn and meal lofts, so well stored indeed, as to induce me to ask Mr. Lambton, whether he was not afraid of having such a weight suspended over his horses' heads. The stables had just been set fair, and the servants gone to their dinners, so that I could not have seen them at a more favourable time; and I must say their neat appearance, coupled with the *excellent condition and sound state of the stud*, reflected the highest credit on John Winter, the huntsman—under whose superintendence they have, for so many years, been placed.

Merton House is a most complete residence for a sportsman; it has every possible convenience for horses and servants, all within itself, as

likewise for a family of moderate size, but all the world know that the worthy occupier of it is a bachelor. The pleasure-grounds, in front of it, are kept in the highest order, and the numerous roads and walks through them, which are daily raked, are covered with London gravel, brought to Newcastle as ballast. We passed the evening tête-à-tête there being at that time no other visitor—rather an unusual occurrence, I believe.

Saturday, 23rd.—The fixture this day was within an easy reach, and Mr. Lambton and myself accompanied the hounds, on their way, which was to me, no small gratification. The eye of man loves to dwell on perfection, and when he finds it in objects agreeable to his taste, the pleasure increases from that circumstance. It would be useless, however, to say more on this subject, than merely to state, what I think is very near the truth—namely, that whoever has seen Mr. Osbaldeston's hounds, *in their best days*, can form a very correct idea of what Mr. Lambton's are, and, without doubt, will continue to be, so long as he is the owner of them. I am inclined, however, to think that, were it possible to compare the two, the *multum in parvo* maxim would be found most to prevail in Mr. Lambton's. It is this, which, in highly bred animals, possessing symmetry as well, gives the stamp of perfection, and should be the aim of breeders of hounds as well of larger animals.

It is amongst the honours paid to fox-hunting, that none who love, and understand it, ever appear to be satiated with it. Thus, that season of the year, when, as Virgil sings, "*nunc frondent sylvæ nunc formosissimus annus*," and the perpetuity of which, according to the poets, was numbered among the felicities of the golden age, is, to the sportsman, one of melancholy rather than of rejoicing, and I have reason to believe,

no person rejoices less, that " the time of the singing birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard," than the gentleman of whom I am speaking. It is, undoubtedly no very pleasing reflection for a master of hounds to indulge in, on his road to cover, that although every thing, on his part, is equal to produce a good day's sport, and that the finding his fox is a moral certainty, still all attempts at sport shall be baffled by a hot sun and a harsh wind, which were precisely the characteristics of this day.

I find, by my note book, that we found our first fox in a fine whin, and killed him in the same. A second went away, and after hunting him two hours, with a wretched scent, but still almost " to death"—for he was seen to lie down—we unfortunately changed to a fresh one, which gave him time to recover himself, and he beat us.

I rode one of Bob's horses called *Duncan*, of whom John Winter gave me the following character. " Don't fear him, sir, he'll not give you a fall, for, if he can't jump over a place, *he'll wade* through it."

Another circumstance occurred which created a smile: whilst picking out a cold scent, in the middle of a rough grass field, all the pack being at work, a brace of hares jumped up in view. Not a hound noticed them, on which I heard Mr. Lambton say to one of the field. "*I hope the Professor saw that.*" I did see it; and I agree with Lord Kintore in thinking, that any wild animal jumping up in the view of hounds, in a moment of disappointment and baffle, such as this was, puts their steadiness from riot to the test, and, if unnoticed, confirms it.

Had the scent served, we should have had some fun this day, for

there was nothing amiss with the country, and some of the field seemed to look well disposed to go the pace. Just as the hounds were enabled to keep going, Mr. Lambton's horse turned sulky with him, at a double fence; stood stock still on the cop, or bank; and would neither leap, nor "wade through" the second ditch; I conclude it was what we called at Rugby, his "first fault."

We were joined at dinner this day, by Mr. Robert Surtees, of Hamsterley Hall, who, as his father has done before him, has long enjoyed the intimate friendship of Mr. Lambton; I should have found him at Merton, indeed, had he not been unable to reach it, on the day previous to my arrival, in consequence of finding himself far from it, on a tired horse, at the end of a capital run with his friend's hounds.

On the following morning, I set out for London, on my road home, not without wishing, as I had before wished, that it had been in my power to have given the Promethean touch of youth to the celebrated sportsman who had so kindly received me, a second time, under his roof. Whether fox-hunting is on the decline, I am unable to determine; I can only say, *I hope it is not*; but it is such men as Mr. Lambton who give it the best support—men who stick to it, on system, for many many years, in the same country, and thus endear themselves to the people over whose property they hunt, and not such as take to countries one year and give them up the next, for the sake, perhaps, of having it said, they were once masters of hounds. Then again, I wish fox-hunting to flourish on another account—*on my country's account*; for, as was said of the Coliseum of Rome, which neither time nor nature would have been able to destroy, so long as fox-hunting stands, England will stand, preserved by the manly spirit engendered by the pursuit. Let it flourish

then, until the moon shall be in its last wane, and the sun shall cease to shine on the world !

I have now got to the end of my Northern tour, having nothing left but to acknowledge—which I do with sincerity and in truth—the attention and kindness I received in the progress of it That an honourable distinction was shown me, it would have been impossible for me not to have felt, and the recollection of it will cheer me in the evening of my days. Still, as Swift observes, " it is the wise choice of the subject that alone adorns and distinguishes the writer," and, like Æsop's fly, that sat upon the axle of the chariot, it is to the popularity of my subjects—fox-hunting especially—that I am indebted for any " Olympic dust," that I may have been honoured with. Of one thing, however, I may be allowed to feel proud. Johnson observes in the concluding passage of his fourteenth Rambler, on the subject of writers or authors, that " a transition, from an author's book to his conversation, is, too often like an entrance into a large city after a distant prospect. Remotely we see nothing but spires of temples, and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendour, grandeur, and magnificence ; but when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarrassed with obstructions, and clouded with smoke." The conduct of my Scotch friends, however, placed me without the pale of this rather severe literary jurisdiction, by their pressing invitations to me to return to their hospitable and jovial hearths. Nevertheless, to insure the sympathy of his readers, is not the easiest of tasks, let the subject be ever so inviting, or the writer ever so *au fait* at them. It is said of Tibullus, for example, that he is the only poet who has been able to arrive at fame, by singing of his own pleasures ; what then must be the chance of him who can only relate his ? All that

I can say then, as regards myself in the progress of these papers, is, that I have devoted my best energies to them in return for the kindness of my brother sportsmen to which they owe their birth. In one respect they have appeared to disadvantage. To record sayings and doings after some distance of time, may be compared to the pickling and preserving of fruits, which, in that state, fall far short of their flavour when fresh gathered from the tree.

One word more, and I have done, (and perhaps it is time to have done; for, in the somewhat technical words of my favourite classic—

——"Nos immensum spatiis confecimus æquor,
Et jam tempus equûm fumantia solvere colla.")

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth is said to speak, which may also be said of the pen, and I have already given my opinion, that a writer without spirit is a writer without interest. Nevertheless, I hope, in my endeavours to amuse, I have not driven the jest so far as to hurt the feelings of any one. Should I have done so, I would kiss the rod that might inflict the merited correction. There is a delicate and honourable reserve that restrains us from the exposure of our own errors and infirmities, which should be more carefully observed when alluding to those of others; and my aim has been, when called upon to condemn, to follow the example of Horace, who is said to have tickled when he gently probed the wound. But what have I been called upon to condemn? Why, nothing but what has emanated from those excesses of zeal and hospitality for which fox-hunters ever have been, and I hope ever will be so conspicuous. By the ancient law of Scotland, a calumniator was punished with death, and I should deserve a hundred deaths had I thus returned evil for good. My object has been an honest desire of imparting pleasure to my readers, and I cannot convict myself of having

stated one untruth, knowing it to have been an untruth. "Truth," however, says the proverb "is not to be spoken at all times," although, as Juvenal says, it is only grating to a tyrant's ear. On the other hand, it is difficult in the reader, and now and then, in the writer, accurately to distinguish flattery from praise, although in their realities, there are few things more distinct. The one I disown; of the other I may have been lavish, as I shall ever be where I think it is due, and where I am able to appreciate it. Scotland and Scotchmen then, for the present adieu! I am indebted to you much, and I should like to visit you once again.

ERRATA.

Page 173, line 14 from bottom, for *foung*, read *found*.
324, line 7 from top, for *Ongley*, read *Rodney*.

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WALTER SPIERS, PRINTER, 399, OXFORD STREET, LONDON.

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ALWIN J. SCHEUER
by Rec'd - 15 June 1933

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